# FORECASTS

## OF THE COMING CENTURY

*Price 2/6 net*


FORECASTS
OF THE
COMING
CENTURY
WEST

# FORECASTS
# OF THE
# COMING CENTURY

BY



A DECADE

OF WRITERS:

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, TOM MANN,

H. RUSSELL SMART, WILLIAM MORRIS, H. S. SALT,

ENID STACY, MARGARET MCMILLAN, GRANT ALLEN,

BERNARD SHAW, EDWARD CARPENTER.

Manchester:

THE LABOUR PRESS LIMITED,

57 AND 59, TIB STREET.

CLARION OFFICE, 72, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E C.

1897.

# PREFATORY NOTE

---

THE present Volume (planned early last year by the Committee of the Labour Press) is an attempt to bring to a focus the speculations of various writers on the changes going on in the social and industrial situation. These changes are taking place along so many lines, that it is naturally difficult to cover the whole ground; but the Land Question, the questions of Trade-Unionism, Co-operation, Parliamentary Action, Education, Art, Literature, and the Status of Women, together with the general positions of Socialism and Anarchism, have all been dealt with in some degree. If it is not intended that the Forecasts should be as absolute as the predictions of Zadkiel's Almanac, we still hope that they may be as correct as those of the Meteorological Office, and that they will indicate the main paths of the storms and calms of the future.

Most of the papers have been specially written for this book and are now for the first time published. The various writers, however, have each taken their line, and are responsible for their own papers only.

The suggestive essay on "The Socialist Ideal in Art," printed originally in the *New Review*, was granted by William Morris to the present book before his last illness and much-regretted death. The thanks of the Labour Press are due to the various contributors, and to Mr. Wm. Heinemann for permission to reprint from the *New Review* of January, '91, the two papers on Art and Literature by W. Morris and H. S Salt respectively.

*March, 1897.*



# CONTENTS

MANCHESTER:

THE LABOUR PRESS LIMITED, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS,

57 AND 59, TIB STREET.

# RE-OCCUPATION OF THE LAND:

## THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE UMEMPLOYED.

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

---

WE ARE NOW APPROACHING the end of a century which has far surpassed all preceding centuries in the increase of man's power over natural forces, and consequent enormous increase in the production of wealth. The amount of this increase may be judged from the fact that, fifteen years ago, the amount of actual steam-power in Great Britain amounted to about ten times the labour-power of the whole working population. It is now certainly much greater, and by the use of labour-saving machinery, this amount of mechanical power is again increased probably ten-fold in efficiency, so that our people now perform a hundred times as much productive work as during the preceding centuries when steam power and machinery were hardly used at all. Yet with this hundredfold-capacity for producing the food, clothing, and other commodities needed for the satisfaction of all the wants of human nature and the comforts and enjoyments of life, what do we find? Huge masses of people suffering untold misery and want in all our great cities, and in country villages surrounded by game-preserves and untilled fields; an increasing number dying of actual starvation; insanity and suicide increasing

more rapidly than the population ; and, according to a very competent authority, a Prison Chaplain, who has studied the statistics of crime for thirty years, an equally large increase in crime and in the prison population.*

As confirming and illustrating all these terrible facts, we have the Yearly Reports of the Registrar General, showing that for the last forty years there has been a continuous increase in the proportion of deaths occurring in workhouses, hospitals, asylums, and other public charitable institutions, from 16 per cent. of the total deaths (in London) in the five years, 1856-60, to 26 per cent in 1886-90; and a similar increase, though not quite so rapid, is shown for the whole kingdom.

Co-incident with all these facts, and to some extent explaining them, is the continual depopulation of the rural districts and increase of town and city populations, certainly largely due, and I believe wholly so, to the monopoly of land in the hands of the landlord class, which has always forbidden and still forbids the free use of their native soil on fair terms to the workers. Hence has arisen the phenomenon of an ever-increasing lack of permanent employment; the flocking of large numbers of rural labourers and their families to the towns; the increase of poverty, starvation, suicide, insanity, and crime; millions of acres of land going out of cultivation, and the cry of agricultural depression, now raised the more loudly because the pockets of the landlords themselves are affected by it. Most of the aspects of the "problem of poverty" above adverted to I have dealt with more or less fully elsewhere,

* See "Increase of Crime," by Rev. W. D. Morrison in the *Nineteenth Century* of June, 1892.

as have many well-known Socialist writers. My present object is to suggest an immediate practical remedy for some of the worst features of the present state of things, by with-drawing from the labour-market the superabundant workers and rendering them wholly self-supporting on the land. This once effected every other worker in the kingdom will be benefited, and the movement for a greatly-improved organisation of society will be advanced by a practical illustration of the enormous waste involved in the capitalistic and competitive system that now prevails.*

The problem of general unemployment is well stated by Mr. J. A. Hobson in the *Contemporary Review* of April, 1896 ("Is Poverty Diminishing?") He says:—"Why is it that, with a wheat-growing area so huge and so productive that in good years whole crops are left to rot in the ground, thousands of English labourers, millions of Russian peasants, cannot get enough bread to eat? Why is it that with so many cotton mills in Lancashire that they cannot all be kept working for any length of time together, thousands of people in Manchester cannot get a decent shirt to their backs? Why is it that, with a growing glut of mines and miners, myriads of people are shivering for lack of coals?" Now, not one of our authorised teachers of political economy, not one of our most experienced legislators can give any clear answer to these questions, except by vague reference to the immutable laws of supply and demand, and by the altogether false statement that things are not so bad as they were, and that in course of time they will improve of themselves. Mr. H.

*The suggestion that follows formed part of my Presidential Address to the Land Nationalisation Society in 1895.—[A.R.W.]

V. Mills had his attention directed to this subject by an individual instance of the same phenomena. He found in Liverpool, next door to each other, a baker, a shoemaker, and a tailor, all out of work, all wanting the bread, clothes and shoes which they could produce, all willing and anxious to work, and yet all compelled to remain idle and half starving. His book has been before the world several years; it contains a practical and efficient remedy for this state of things; yet no attempt whatever has been made to give his plan a fair trial. Let us therefore see if we can throw a little more light on the problem, and thus help to force it upon the attention of those who have the power, but who believe that nothing can be done.

The answer to the question so well put by Mr. Hobbs, and which Mr. Stead, in the *Review of Reviews*, considers to be the modern problem of the Sphinx which it needs a modern Œdipus to solve, is nevertheless perfectly easy. To put it in its simplest form it is as follows:—Unemployment exists, and must increase, *because, under the conditions of modern society, production of every kind is carried on, not at all for the purpose of supplying the wants of the producers, but solely with the object of creating wealth for the capitalist employer.*

Now, I believe, that this statement contains the absolute root of the whole matter, and indicates the true and only lines of the complete remedy. But to many it will be a hard saying; let us therefore examine it a little in detail.

The capitalist cotton-spinner, cloth or boot-manufacturer, colliery-owner, or iron-master, care not the least *who* buys their goods or *who* uses them, so long as *they* can get a good price for them. The cotton, the boots, the coals, or the iron, may be exported to India or Australia, to America or

to Timbuctoo, while millions are insufficiently clad or warmed in the very places where all these things are made. Even the very people who make them may thus suffer, through insufficient wages or irregular employment; yet the upholders of the present system will not admit that anything is fundamentally wrong. The lowness of wages and irregularity of employment, are, they tell us, due to general causes over which they have no control—such as foreign competition, insufficient markets, etc., which injure the capitalists as well as the workers. The unemployed exist, they say, on account of the improvements in machinery and in mechanical processes in all civilised countries, which economise labour and thus render production cheaper. The surplus labour, therefore, is not wanted; and that portion of it which cannot be absorbed in administering to the luxury of the rich must be supported by charity, or starve. That is the last word of the capitalists and of the majority of the politicians. But though capitalists and politicians are satisfied to let things go on as they are, with ever increasing wealth and luxury on the one hand, ever increasing misery and discontent on the other, thinking men and women all over the world are *not* satisfied, and *will not* be satisfied, without a complete solution of the problem; which, though they are not yet able to see clearly, they firmly believe can be found.

Governments in modern times, have gone on the principle that they have nothing whatever to do with the employment or want of employment of the people,—with high wages or low wages, with luxury or starvation, except inasmuch as the latter calamity may be prevented by the poor-law guardians. A great change has, however, occurred in the

last few years. Both the local and imperial Governments have admitted the principle of a reasonable subsistence-wage, and are acting upon it, in flagrant opposition to the principles of the old political economy. Now, too, I observe, the buying of Government stores abroad, because they can be obtained a fraction per cent. cheaper than at home, is being given up, though only three or four years ago the practice was defended as being in accordance with true economical principles, and also because it was the *duty* of the Government to buy as cheaply as possible in the interest of the taxpayer. I only mention these facts to show that new ideas are permeating modern society, and are compelling Governments, however reluctantly, to act upon them. We may, therefore, hope to compel our rulers to acknowledge that it is their duty also to provide the conditions necessary to enable those who are idle and destitute—from no fault of their own, but solely through the failure of our competitive and monopolist system—to support themselves by their own labour. Hitherto they have told us that it cannot be done, that it would disorganise society, that it would injure other workers. We must, therefore, show them *how* it can be done, and insist that at all events the experiment shall be tried. I will now give my ideas of how this great result can be brought about, and the reasons which I believe demonstrate that the method will be successful.

Hitherto there has been no organisation of communities or of society at large for purposes of production, except so far as it has arisen incidentally in the interest of the capitalist employers and the monopolist land-owner. The result is the terrible social quagmire in which we now find

ourselves. But it is certain that organisation in the interest of the producers, who constitute the bulk of the community, is possible; and as, under existing conditions, the millions who are wholly destitute of land or capital cannot organise themselves, it becomes the duty of the State, by means of the local authorities, to undertake this organisation; and if it is undertaken on the principle that all production is to be, in the first place, for consumption by the producers themselves, and only when the necessary wants of all are satisfied, for exchange in order to procure luxuries, such organisation cannot fail to be a success.

My confidence in its success is founded on three considerations, which I will briefly enumerate. The first is, the enormous productive power of labour when aided by modern labour-saving machinery. Mr. Edward Atkinson, admitted to be the greatest American authority on the statistics of production and commerce, has calculated that two men's labour for a year in the wheat-growing States of America will produce, ready for consumption, 1,000 barrels of flour, barrels included; and this quantity will produce bread for 1,000 persons for a year. Now as we can grow more bushels of wheat an acre than are grown in America, we could also produce the bread for 1,000 persons by the labour of say four or five men, including the baking. Again, he tells us that, with the best machinery, one workman can produce cotton cloth for 250 people, woollen goods for 300, or boots and shoes for 1,000. And as other necessaries will require an equally moderate amount of labour, we see how easily a community of workers could produce, at all events all the necessaries of life, by the expenditure of but a small portion of their total labour-power.

The next consideration is, that in the Labour Colonies of Holland, the unemployed *are* so organised as to produce all that they consume, or its value, *without the use of any labour-saving machinery*. The reason they have none, the director told Mr. Mills, is that it would lead to a difficulty in finding work for the people of the colony, and it would then be less easy to manage them. The difficulty in this case seems to be to provide against the possibility of a too great success!*

The third consideration which points to the certainty of success, is, the demonstrable enormous waste of the present capitalistic and competitive system; and the corresponding enormous economies of a community in which all production would be carried on primarily for consumption by the producers themselves. This economy will be illustrated as we consider the organisation of such a community.

A careful consideration of the whole problem by experts will determine the minimum size of a colony calculated to ensure the most economical production of all the chief necessaries of life. Let us take it at about 5,000 persons, including men, women, and children, which is Mr. Mills' estimate. Enough land will be required to grow all the kinds of produce needed, both vegetable and animal—say two to three thousand acres—and a skilled manager will be engaged to superintend each separate department of industry. Not only will bread, vegetables, fruit, and meat of all kinds be grown on the land, but the whole of the needful manufactures will be carried on, aided by steam, water, or wind power, as may be found most convenient and economical. To provide clothes, tools, furniture,

* See "Poverty and the State," by H. V. Mills, chapter X.

utensils, and conveniences of all kinds for 5,000 people, workshops and factories of suitable dimensions will be provided, and skilled workers in each department will be selected from among the unemployed or partially employed. A village with separate cottages or lodgings for families and individuals, with central cooking and eating-rooms for all who desire to use them, would form an essential part of the colony. The village would be built on a high yet central position, so that all the sewage could be applied by gravitation to the lower and more distant portions of the land, while all the solid refuse and manurial matter would be applied to the higher portions. Here would be the first great economy, both in wealth and health. Every particle of sewage and refuse would be immediately returned to the land, where, under the beneficent action of the chemistry of nature, it would be again converted into wholesome food and other products.

Another economy, of vast amount, but difficult to estimate, would arise from the whole effective population being available to secure the crops when at their maximum productiveness. Who has not seen, during wet seasons, hay lying in the fields week after week till greatly deteriorated or completely spoilt; shocks of wheat sprouting and ruined; fruit rotting on the ground; growing crops choked with weeds,—all involving loss to the amount of many millions annually, and all due to the capitalistic system which has led to the overcrowding of the towns and the depopulation of the rural districts. But this is only a portion of the loss from deficiency of labour at the critical moment. Agricultural chemists know that, even in good seasons, a considerable portion of the nutritious qualities of

hay is lost by the cutting of the grass being delayed a few days or weeks, owing to uncertain weather, the pressure of other work, or a deficiency of labour. The critical moment is when the grass is in flower. Every day later it deteriorates; and in our self-supporting colonies the whole population would be available to supply whatever assistance the head farmer required to get the hay made in the best possible condition. A single fine day, utilised, with the aid of machinery and ample labour, would often save hundreds of pounds value to the colony. The same would be the case with wheat and other corn crops, as well as with fruit and vegetables.

In such a colony education could be carried on in a rational manner not possible under the present conditions of society, where the means of industrial training have to be specially provided. Ordinary school work would be at the most three or four hours daily; the remainder of the working day being devoted to various forms of industrial work. Every child would be taught to help in the simpler agricultural processes, as weeding, fruit gathering, etc.; and besides this each person would learn at least two trades or occupations, more or less contrasted; one being light and sedentary, the other more active and laborious, and involving more or less out-door work. By this means not only would a pleasant and healthful variety of occupation be rendered possible for each worker, but the community would derive the benefit of being able to concentrate a large amount of skilled labour on any pressing work, such as buildings or machinery.

But perhaps the greatest economy of all would arise from such a community being almost wholly free from

costs of transit, profits of the middleman, and need for advertising. The total amount of this kind of waste, on the present system, is something appalling, and can be best realised by considering the difference between the cost of manufacture and the retail price of a few typical articles. Wheat is now about 22s. to 24s. a quarter, which quantity yields nearly six hundred pounds of bread. In our proposed community the labour of making the flour would be repaid by the value of the pollard and bran, while the bread-making would employ two or three men and women. The actual cost of their four-pound loaf, reckoning the labourers to receive present wages, would be about 2d., while it now costs 3½d. or 4d.—a saving of at least 40 or 50 per cent. Again, the best Cork butter sells wholesale at 8d. a pound, the actual maker probably getting no more than 7d., while the retail consumer has to pay double—here would be a saving of at least 50 per cent. Milk is sold wholesale by the farmers at about 7d. a gallon, while it is retailed at 16d. a gallon—a saving of more than 60 per cent. In meat there would be, probably, about the same saving as in bread; in vegetables and fruit very much more; in coals bought wholesale from the pit, as compared with the rate at which it is sold by the hundredweight or the pennyworth to the poor in great cities, an equally large saving. And in addition to all this there would be the economy in the cooking for a large community; in the freshness and good quality of all food and manufactured products; and, further, in the saving of labour by all those improvements in gas and water supply, in disposing of refuse, in warming and ventilation, which can be easily provided for a large community living in a compact and well arranged set of buildings.

Taking all these various economies into consideration, it is probably far below the mark to say that our present system of production on a huge scale for the benefit of capitalists and landlords only, on the average doubles the cost of everything to the consumer; that is to say, the cost of distribution is equal to, and often much greater than, the cost of production. And this is said to be an economical system! A system too perfect, and almost too sacred to be touched by the sacrilegious hands of the reformer! We are to go on for ever spending a pound to get every pound's worth of goods from the producer to the consumer; just as under our Poor Law system it costs a shilling to give a starving man a shilling's worth of food and lodging.

But there is yet another economy, which I have not hitherto mentioned, and which may perhaps be said to be far greater in real value and importance than all the rest, and that is the economy to the actual producer, of time, of labour, of health, and the large increase in his means of recreation and happiness. Agricultural labourers now often have to walk two or three miles to their work; mill-hands, including women and children, walk long distances in all weathers to be at the mill-gates by six in the morning; workers by the million undergo a process of slow but certain destruction in unsanitary workshops, or in dangerous or unhealthy occupations, many of which (as making the enamelled iron advertising plates, for example) are quite unnecessary for the needs of a properly organised community; while in all cases it is only a question of expense to save the workers from any injury to health. In our self-supporting communities, all these sources of waste and misery would be avoided. All work would be near at hand.

No work permanently injurious to health would be permitted; while the alternations of outdoor and indoor work, together with the fact that every worker would be working for himself, for his family, and for a community, of which he formed an integral part on an equality with all his fellow-workers, would give a new interest to labour similar to that which every gardener feels in growing vegetables for his own table, and every mechanic in fitting up some useful article in his own house. Then again, while living in and surrounded by the country and enjoying all the advantages and pleasures of country life, a community of five thousand persons would possess in themselves the means of supplying most of the relaxations and enjoyments of the town, such as music, theatricals, clubs, reading-rooms, and every form of healthy social intercourse.

Are all these economies, and all this health and comfort for a large population, of less importance to the nation than the increased wealth of one or two capitalists? Must thousands or millions continue to have their lives shortened, and during their short lives have a minimum of the comforts and pleasures of life in order that a few may be inordinately rich? I earnestly call upon all who have the welfare of humanity at heart, to consider at what needless cost to the workers the boasted wealth of the nation is now produced.

This is not the place to go into the minute details of the establishment of such communities, but a few words as to ways and means may be considered necessary.

It has been estimated that the capital required to buy the land and start such a colony would not exceed two years' poor rates of a Union where there are an equal number

Taking all these various economies into consideration, it is probably far below the mark to say that our present system of production on a huge scale for the benefit of capitalists and landlords only, on the average doubles the cost of everything to the consumer; that is to say, the cost of distribution is equal to, and often much greater than, the cost of production. And this is said to be an economical system! A system too perfect, and almost too sacred to be touched by the sacrilegious hands of the reformer! We are to go on for ever spending a pound to get every pound's worth of goods from the producer to the consumer; just as under our Poor Law system it costs a shilling to give a starving man a shilling's worth of food and lodging.

But there is yet another economy, which I have not hitherto mentioned, and which may perhaps be said to be far greater in real value and importance than all the rest, and that is the economy to the actual producer, of time, of labour, of health, and the large increase in his means of recreation and happiness. Agricultural labourers now often have to walk two or three miles to their work; mill-hands, including women and children, walk long distances in all weathers to be at the mill-gates by six in the morning; workers by the million undergo a process of slow but certain destruction in unsanitary workshops, or in dangerous or unhealthy occupations, many of which (as making the enamelled iron advertising plates, for example) are quite unnecessary for the needs of a properly organised community; while in all cases it is only a question of expense to save the workers from any injury to health. In our self-supporting communities, all these sources of waste and misery would be avoided. All work would be near at hand.

No work permanently injurious to health would be permitted; while the alternations of outdoor and indoor work, together with the fact that every worker would be working for himself, for his family, and for a community, of which he formed an integral part on an equality with all his fellow-workers, would give a new interest to labour similar to that which every gardener feels in growing vegetables for his own table, and every mechanic in fitting up some useful article in his own house. Then again, while living in and surrounded by the country and enjoying all the advantages and pleasures of country life, a community of five thousand persons would possess in themselves the means of supplying most of the relaxations and enjoyments of the town, such as music, theatricals, clubs, reading-rooms, and every form of healthy social intercourse.

Are all these economies, and all this health and comfort for a large population, of less importance to the nation than the increased wealth of one or two capitalists? Must thousands or millions continue to have their lives shortened, and during their short lives have a minimum of the comforts and pleasures of life in order that a few may be inordinately rich? I earnestly call upon all who have the welfare of humanity at heart, to consider at what needless cost to the workers the boasted wealth of the nation is now produced.

This is not the place to go into the minute details of the establishment of such communities, but a few words as to ways and means may be considered necessary.

It has been estimated that the capital required to buy the land and start such a colony would not exceed two years' poor rates of a Union where there are an equal number

of paupers. But there is really no necessity for buying the land. It might be taken where required at a fair valuation and paid for by means of a terminable rental, similar to that by which Irish tenants have been enabled to purchase their farms; but in this case the county would be the purchaser, not an individual, and after the first year, or perhaps two years, this rent-charge would be easily payable by the colony. The capital needed for buildings, machinery, and one year's partial subsistence, should be furnished, half by the County or Union, and half by the Government, free of interest, but to be repaid by instalments to commence after, say, five or ten years. It would really be to the advantage of the community at large to *give* this capital, since it would inevitably lead to the abolition of unemployment and of able-bodied pauperism, and the saving thus effected would more than repay the initial outlay.

In each Colony there would be grown or manufactured a considerable amount of surplus produce, which would be sold in order to purchase food which cannot be produced at home—as tea, coffee, spices, etc., and also such raw materials as iron and coal. The things thus produced for sale would vary according to the facilities for its production and local demand. In some colonies it would be wheat or barley, in others, butter and cheese, in others again, flax, vegetables, fruit, or poultry, in others perhaps, leather or wool. And as *all* the products of our soil except milk are largely imported, there is ample range for producing articles for sale which would not in any way affect prices or interfere with outside labour.

At first, of course, such colonies must be organised and all the work done under general regulations and the same

discipline as is maintained in any farm or factory, but with no unnecessary interference with liberty out of working hours. Accounts would be strictly kept and audited, and all profits would go to increasing the comfort of the colonists in various ways, and in paying surplus wages to be spent, or saved, as the individual pleased. Under reasonable restrictions as to notice every one would be at liberty to quit the colony; but with such favourable conditions of life as would prevail there it is probable that only a small proportion would do so. None, apparently, quit the Dutch colony of Frederiksoord.

But as time went on, and a generation of workers grew up in the colony itself, a system of self-government might be established; and for this purpose I think Mr. Bellamy's method the only one likely to be a permanent success. It rests on the principle that, in an industrial community, those only are fit to be rulers who have for many years formed integral parts of it, who have passed through its various grades as workers or overseers, and who have thus acquired an intimate practical acquaintance with its needs, its capacities, and its possibilities of improvement. Persons who had themselves enjoyed the advantages of the system, and who had suffered from whatever injudicious restrictions or want of organisation had prevailed, and who had nearly reached the age of retirement from the more laborious work, would be free from petty jealousies of their fellow workers, and would have no objects to aim at except the continued success of the colony and the happiness of all its inmates. On this principle those who had worked in the colony for at least fifteen or twenty years, and who had reached some grade above that of simple workmen, should form the

governing body, appointing the superintendents of the various departments, and making such general regulations as were needed to ensure the prosperity of the commun ty and the happiness of all its members.

Now, I would ask, what valid reason can be given against trying this great experiment in every county in Great Britain and Ireland, so as at once to absorb the larger part of the unemployed as well as all paupers who are not past work? The only real objection, from the capitalist's point of view, that I can imagine, is, that colonies in which the whole of the produce went to the workers themselves, including of course their own sick and aged, would be so attractive that they would draw to them large numbers of workers of all kinds, and thus interfere with the capitalists' labour supply. This, I believe, would, after a few years, inevitably occur; but, from my point of view, and from that probably of most workers, that circumstance would afford the greatest argument in favour of the scheme. For it would show that, with a proper organisation of labour, capitalist production was unnecessary; it would afford practical proof that labourers can successfully produce without the intervention of capitalist employers; and if they can do so it will hardly be contended that unemployment and pauperism must be maintained for the benefit of capitalists.

In this connection I will quote a passage from the writings of that remarkable observer and thinker, the late Richard Jeffrey. He says:—

"I verily believe that the earth in one year can produce enough food to last for thirty. Why then have we not enough? Why do people die of starvation, or lead a miser-

able existence on the verge of it? Why have millions upon millions to toil from morning till evening just to gain a mere crust of bread? Because of the absolute lack of organisation by which such labour should produce its effects, the absolute lack of distribution, the absolute lack even of the very idea that such things are possible. Nay, even to mention such things, to say that they are possible, is criminal with many. Madness could hardly go further."*

This was written a good many years ago. Now, we who hold such opinions are considered to be, not criminals, but merely cranks; and it is even allowed that we have good ideas sometimes, if only we were more practical. But surely nothing can be more practical than the proposal made here, since the experiment has already been tried in Holland, and has succeeded. To produce any real effect, however, it must be brought into operation on a large scale, and this can only be done by the local authorities, to whom must be given all necessary powers, with the needful financial assistance from the Government.

So soon as labour-colonies of the kind here suggested have been established for a few years, it is quite certain that the District Councils will no longer endure the old, bad, wasteful, and degrading system of the Union Workhouses, but will obtain land, in the vicinity of existing workhouses where possible, and establish labour-colonies of the same type. The effects of the new system will soon become palpable to every householder in the kingdom, in enormously decreased poor-rates, and the almost complete absence of the unemployed. Public opinion will then be all in favour of the new system, and legislation will be demanded and

* "The Story of My Heart," p. 194.

quickly obtained, enabling any number of persons, who wish to form such a community by voluntary association, to have the land required in any part of the county on a permanent tenure, and at a fair agricultural rental.

Numerous self-supporting co-operative labour-colonies being thus established all over the country, their connection by lines of tramways, where required, and the arrangements they would soon make for mutual assistance and exchange of commodities, for the common use of mills or of costly machinery, together with the healthy rivalry that would inevitably spring up, would still further increase the advantages to be derived from them. And these advantages would extend to every member of the community. For not only would the withdrawal of the whole surplus labour now represented by the unemployed or partially unemployed, inevitably cause a large rise in the rate of wages in all departments of industry; but the high standard of living, and the freedom from the anxiety now inseparable from capitalistic wage-labour would draw more and more of the workers to such communities, and thus compel capitalists to offer higher and higher wages, in order to obtain the services of the workers. This would result in the capitalist manufacturer being content with an amount of profit sufficient to repay him for his work as organiser and superintendent, as the only alternative to the loss of his fixed capital. The whole net profits of every industrial enterprise would then be distributed as wages to the various classes of workers, and Labour would, for the first time, receive its full and fair reward.

---

# Trade Unionism and Co-operation in the Future

By Tom Mann.

---

The functions and sphere of Trade Unionism and Co-operation are held in varying degrees of respect by the advocates of Socialism, so I propose to examine the nature of these institutions with a view of arriving at a correct appreciation of their merits and limitations, which may in turn enable us to understand the extent to which these voluntary agencies are likely to continue with us.

When the attention of an ordinary individual is first arrested, and directed to the necessity for self respect and due regard for others, such an one is likely to be drawn alternately by appeals to the necessity, on the one side, for sturdy, self-reliant action, where he will fully realise his individual responsibility and stand firm against all comers; and on the other side, to the necessity for loyalty to his workmates, to the necessity for reasonable consultation with others likely to be affected by his personal conduct, until he becomes pledged to make no important move without first submitting his ideas to, and obtaining the endorsement of, his colleagues.

Trade Unionism, or the combination of workers for the

improvement of their conditions, has always appealed to both qualities, and has done much to develop them.

At a time in our history when wages were low and working hours excessive beyond precedent, when employers were exercising an arbitrary power, and ruthlessly ignoring every humane consideration as regarded those in their employ, the few sturdy individuals in the workers' ranks, possessed of more than average courage and intelligence, appealed to their workmates to dare to take action by organisation; and the struggles between employers and employé of the nineteenth century are likely to prove of the greatest interest to future students of our economic development.

The basis of action was and still is, for those persons immediately engaged in any given department of industry to voice their own grievances and formulate their demands. When this has been done in a too short-sighted fashion,—such as not taking into account the condition of persons in similar employment elsewhere, it has often happened that the workers have been beaten, which in time has resulted in the extension of the Union to the covering of those sections not formerly connected. So that one Union may now cover a score of sections whose work is related to each other. Thus, the Engineers' Union has developed from "The Journeymen Steam Engine, Machine Maker, and Millwrights' Friendly Society," to "The Amalgamated Society of Engineers," which consists of members belonging to the following trades:—Smiths, Ship Smiths, Angle Iron Smiths, Fitters, Turners, Roll Turners, Pattern Makers, Millwrights, Mechanical Draughtsmen, Planers, Borers, Slotters, and other machine men; Brass Finishers and

Coppersmiths employed in the engineering and shipbuilding trades; Electrical Engineers; Machine-Joiners employed in the construction of cotton, silk, flax, woollen, or other machinery; Die Sinkers, Press Tool Makers, Stampers, and Drop Hammer Forgers.

In some circles there prevails an impression that machinery is reducing all work to one dead level, where less and less skill is called for. That there is a tendency in this direction there can be no doubt, but it is not less true that the expert specialist in every department is called for to an increasing extent, and the qualifications for such experts are of a more exacting nature than ever before. No one can doubt but that a Trade Union is more especially adapted to deal with the innumerable difficulties arising in connection with such a diversity of occupations as those enumerated, requiring continuous re-adjustment.

But taking the main object aimed at by the Trade Unionists in the past, it cannot be said that they sought in any way to change the Industrial basis of Society; they have not sought to change from Capitalism to some other "ism." They have not attempted to destroy the Individualist system of ownership and control in favour of a Co-operative system. They have simply endeavoured to improve wages under the wages system, and to reduce working hours, providing also by means of accumulated funds to mitigate the evil effects of sickness and want of employment, but they have never yet seriously tackled the question as to how to establish an Industrial system where there should be no "want" of employment.

Some Socialists of my acquaintance chime in here and declare that Trade Unionism as an institution is played out,

that, economically speaking, it has seen its best days, and that, therefore, it is practically a waste of time to spend one's energies in connection with it, arguing that the larger industries are now quite ready for Socialisation, and that the others are rapidly developing in the same direction. This implies that industries will be socialised without the aid of Trade Unionism, and that once socialised all will be right.

What then is Socialisation? It means the complete taking over by the community in its collective capacity of all machinery and plant in connection with any given industry, and the community, through its appointed committee, taking the responsibility of the future management of such industry in the public interest, involving, of course, the complete elimination of the capitalist class as far as the particular industry is concerned.

In those instances where national and even international monopolies exist, as in the case of some minerals, oils, sewing cotton, iron and chemical works, also the factories, mines, and land, it is not difficult to conceive of the Nationalisation and Socialisation of such industries, providing we had the requisite volume of opinion favourable thereto; we cannot claim to have this opinion properly developed at the present time; and even if we had, it would yet leave the larger half of our industries as not being in a state of preparedness for Nationalisation and Socialisation.

By what means are we to formulate opinion favourable to the State ownership and control in those instances where, economically, the industries are sufficiently developed, and by what means are we to assist in the further economic development of those industries which are in a less formed

state? I reply that there is no more powerful agency in Great Britain at the present time for the development of the necessary opinion and general fitness for such Socialisation than the Trade Unions. For although it is true that the majority of the Unions and of the members of the Unions have not so far endorsed the principles of Socialism, it is true that to a greater extent than ever individual members are approving of and working for Socialism in an intelligent manner, and these are having an important effect upon the rank and file of their membership. And if it should be said that the value of such persons consists in this, that they have virtually given up their Trade Unionism and adopted Socialism, and that they might just as well leave their Unions as not; then I reply, that the fact that they have learned the necessity for Socialism does not call for their severance from their Unions or prove the uselessness of those Unions; for if the Unions did not exist to-day, we should be further away from Socialism than we are now, and the spirit engendered by the Unions, and the actual change of environment brought about by orthodox Trade Union action is distinctly conducive to the advancement of opinions on the one side, and of practical industrial capacity on the part of the workers on the other.

The Unions may long continue to do all they have ever attempted, and in addition may develop general opinion favourable to the general Socialisation of Industry.

Whilst the work of Trade Unionism proceeds in one direction and Socialist advocacy continues to gather strength, a large field is still left open for those who find satisfaction in voluntary Co-operative effort; and, as we may expect that certain industries although socialised will never be

nationalised, but controlled entirely by the Municipalities, so it is quite possible that experience will show the desirability of socialisation in some directions without either nationalising or municipalising. The real essentials of industrial and social well-being are : That no section shall exercise a monopoly power against the rest of the community, and that all shall contribute of their energy to the common well-being in a manner approved of by the community at large.

Now, to take the Co-operative movement as we find it to-day, faults included, what is it? Some Socialists would say it is an institution claiming to be democratic but which is in reality essentially plutocratic, being based upon dividend and interest receiving, and in no material way differing from the ordinary capitalist system. I am not able to speak of it in such terms. I know, of course, that many are connected with the Distributive Store Movement for no higher reason than that of individual gain by the dividend on sales being returned to them, and that others use the movement as a savings bank where they get a higher interest than is possible with equal security elsewhere, and that these have probably never in their lives given one serious thought to the essentials of genuine co-operation. This does not alter the fact that the pioneers of the movement aimed at superceding the Capitalist system of industry, and replacing it by a scientifically organised system of Democratic Co-operation, and although, the ideal has been for the most part lost sight of, it is the fact that to-day there are in the Co-operative movement many hundreds of highly intelligent men and women working for the true Co-operation, where shall exist no exploiters by interest, profit, or rent ; and if

we take the productive side of the movement, although it is still found necessary to recognise the interest-paying system, at least this can honestly be said, that by steady steps they are gradually replacing Capitalist ownership and control by Democratic ownership and control. Instead of relying upon the Capitalist organiser, they as workmen and women have developed the requisite capacity to entirely control the industrial establishments in which they work, and are gradually clearing out the Capitalist financiers. Whatever else may be said, it must be admitted that this is distinctly in the interests of the workers and determinedly opposed to Capitalism. In some 130 different productive establishments in this country, this Co-operative principle is being successfully carried out, and to my mind the time has arrived when the Socialists of this country should forthwith become closely identified with one form or other of Industrial Co-operation.

At present the vast majority of Socialists purchase their personal and household requirements from ordinary plutocratic anti-Socialist establishments. Not less than 3s. in the pound goes to maintain the opponents of Socialism, and if one half of this were diverted into a Socialist channel, to be used as a fund for propaganda or other work as might be agreed upon, we should no longer feel the pinch of poverty in the movement. And see how large a productive trade might be done under such a Socialist co-operative system. It would be a very moderate figure to estimate the Socialist families in this country at 100,000, whose weekly purchasing power might be put down at 25s. each, one half of which would be for commodities manufactured in this country. Certainly, there is nothing to prevent every article of

clothing, all bread stuffs and other food, furniture and general utensils, all being produced under genuine co-operative conditions, which would not only finance the movement, but develop a Socialist market of ever-increasing proportions, concurrently displacing the capitalists.

The following extract is from a paper read at this year's Co-operative Congress, at Woolwich, by Mr. A. Williams:—

> Belgium has about 500 co-operative societies in all, of which by far the greater number appear to be consumers' societies. The statistics I have of thirty-two such societies give nearly 19,000 members, and sales of £91,000 a year. The Co-operative Pharmacy of Brussels, included in these, has alone a membership of 12,000, and its sales are nearly £12,000 a year. The most interesting societies are the large socialist bakeries, owned by immense co-operative societies of workers of every calling, which exist in all the principal industrial centres. These are admitted to be well managed, even by those who dislike their politics. Some of them have from 6,000 to 8,000 members: one in Brussels bakes 115,000 loaves a week, and makes a profit of nearly £10,000 a year. It has also a co-operative restaurant, an institution also known in Paris. The Socialist party look upon these societies chiefly as a means of organising and educating the working classes for political and economic emancipation, and of providing funds for their political warfare. They pay no interest on capital: a large part of the profits is devoted to propaganda, but a part is also paid to the consumers in the form of checks exchangeable for loaves. By their means the party has a press, buildings, and the means to fight elections and keep members in Parliament.

Another direction in which the productive co-operative societies have been of great service, in the Midlands especially, is by affording a haven of refuge to men who have been prominent in the labour movement and are boycotted by the capitalists. Over and over again have good men found jobs in one or other of these establishments when, had there been no such refuge, the labour movement in the district must have lost its advocate, and untold suffering would have been the lot of his family. The Trade Union organiser and

Socialist agitator is driven oftentimes to starvation for lack of such a means of escape. The very knowledge of the existence of such places in sympathy with the advanced movement and the men identified therewith is in itself a check upon employers.

But, valuable as the movement is in these directions, these are after all only the incidental advantages; the real thing is that the workers themselves become entirely responsible for the control of the Industrial concern, become subjected to disciplinary rules framed by themselves alone, and so are relieved of the incubus of the capitalist exploiter, and give the lie direct to those who have argued that workmen must always rely upon someone outside their ranks to organise trade. Of course they are surrounded by the capitalists' system and conditions, and cannot enjoy the full effects of real co-operation; but every additional factory, workshop, or mill run on Co-operative lines makes it easier for the others to run successfully in the end, at any rate, if not immediately.

As we are agreed that the object aimed at by Socialists and by Co-operators is the Socialisation of Industry, need we be much concerned as to the particular means used to bring this Socialisation about? And whilst we work ardently through Municipal and Parliamentary Agencies, should we not be equally ready to work through Voluntary Agencies also? Already, boots and shoes, clothing of all kinds, furniture, crockery, and hardware, etc., are produced in different districts, and the productive societies are gradually federating themselves together to prevent overlapping, and to render mutual assistance. What is there to prevent the continued and relatively rapid growth of this

movement? The chief element of success is a secure market; this can be provided in proportion as Socialists and Labour folk generally are willing to take the trouble to obtain supplies from Co-operative Sources; and as soon as experience shows it to be desirable for any given industry to be municipalised and nationalised, the fact that it is already virtually socialised by voluntary means will render the process a very easy one.

I expect to see Voluntary Co-operation develop on a large scale both distributive and productive, and I hope to see it so develop for the following reasons:—

1. Because it is one of the best means of enabling the workers to obtain the necessary industrial experience to enable them to entirely manage their own affairs.
2. Because in the war between Individualism and Socialism, many of the workers are victimised by the capitalist controllers of the factories, etc., and democratically controlled co-operative establishments affords a ready asylum to such without charity or patronage.
3. Because all work done under co-operative conditions means so much the less under the control of the plutocracy, and is, therefore, a distinct advance towards the complete Socialisation of industry.

To revert again to the Trade Union movement, in order to judge of its possible scope, we had better reflect that it must be a long time yet before Socialist conditions of Society can be generally reached. During all this period Trade Unionism is absolutely necessary. The weakness of

the Union movement, so far, has been its sectional and isolated character; never yet have we had a real national movement, still less an international one.

The miners, probably, present the nearest approach to a national movement, but, as yet, we have Wales standing by itself; England the same, with the exception of the Northumberland Miners' Union, which so far declines to become connected with the National Federation, whilst some parts of Scotland work with the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and others do not, and, so far, these various unions have not been able to federate for common purposes, although International Conferences of Miners are now held at regular intervals, tending to bring about a good understanding. But the programme of the miners, what is it as usually set forth by the ordinary miner's advocate? The most sanguine among the prominent men dare not go beyond the Nationalisation of Mines and Railways, an eight hour day, and a living wage, and the living wage which they were supposed to have secured in thousands of instances is not more than a pound a week, and the eight hour day is not yet secured, and the Nationalisation of Mines and Railways stands as yet in the background, being so timidly referred to as to show that there is not much spirit in the demand.

Does this tell against Trade Unionism? Not at all,—it simply tells against timidity and sectionalism. Instead of having used up Trade Unionism for all it is worth, we have never thoroughly applied it. What is now imperatively called for is the complete organisation of each trade Nationally, then a working understanding being arrived at between all of these unions on a National basis and, as far as may be, on an International basis also.

To discard Trade Unionism as a force would be exceedingly foolish; not to apply it on an extensive scale altogether beyond anything yet done would be to neglect one of the chief means for overthrowing the existing system and making a better possible.

At the International Socialist Workers and Trade Union Congress, held in London last year, the subject of Trade Unionism was dealt with on the Economic and Industrial Commission, the report of that commission which was accepted by the Congress, contains the following important paragraph:—

> The Trade Union struggles of the workers are indispensable to resist the economic tyranny of capital, and thereby better the actual condition of the toilers Without trade unions no living wage and no shortening of hours of labour can be expected. By this struggle, however, the exploitation of labour will only be lessened, not abolished. The exploitation of labour can only be done away with entirely when society has taken control of all the means of production, including the land and the means of distribution.

This, however, requires in the first instance a system of legislative measures. In order to carry out these measures completely, the working-class should be the dominating political power, which depends on the standard of organisation attained. The Trade Unions, therefore, help to consolidate the political power of the labouring classes, by reason of their organising efforts. The organisation of the working-class is incomplete and unfurnished so long as it is political only.

An attempt was made last year (August, 1896) to form an International Federation of all organisations connected with ship, dock and river industries; this includes all seagoing men and all varieties of dockers. By the various Unions remaining isolated, many of the conditions obtained

in 1889 and 1890 have been lost, the employers being more perfectly organised than the men; and by attempting to fight the Shipping Federation in one or two ports only, those affected have learned the necessity for action on a much more extensive scale. This International Federation of Ship, Dock, and River Workers already embraces all British Ports and many of the Continental, American, and Canadian and Australian ones too, and will be used to obtain better conditions in the matter of working hours and wages; though its power will no doubt often be used to bring pressure to bear on Parliament. If it succeeds it will be imitated by those in other trades, and then we shall have all the machinery necessary for a general strike should this at any time be considered desirable; and whatever we may do in this country, it is clear that some of the continental countries are alive to the advantages to be obtained by a general national strike. In Belgium a very imperfectly organised national strike had the effect of causing Parliament to grant the suffrage. Sweden and Austria are using the same means, and by it they are likely to succeed; and if we in this country wish to obtain general advantages of an economic or political character, it would be well to have the machinery in hand, making a general strike possible.

To forecast the probable development of the Labour and Socialist movement in this country, I should say we may expect that inside of the next ten years Trade Unionism will be twice as strong as at present in point of numbers, and twenty times as strong in influence; that is, the numbers should increase from one million and three-quarters of the adult male population to twice that number in the time named, and this would carry with it an enormous economic

and political influence, providing of course that the movement is wisely and courageously directed.

The Co-operators, both Distributive and Productive sides, are certain to develop, and a Socialist Co-operative movement will exist in this country inside of twelve months with enormous possibillties. Exactly how the Trade Unionists may be brought into direct contact so as to become part of the Co-operative movement in its various phases is a question I need not attempt to speculate upon; but already in the productive Co-partnership movement the Trade Unionists are exercising a healthy influence. Politically, these same persons are being weaned from mere Liberalism and Toryism, and as they are, and are likely to be, upholders of Parliamentary action, to an ever-increasing extent, they will become supporters of the Socialist Party, which is certain to have a group of members in Parliament after next general election, and will probably gain several seats at bye-elections before the general comes on.

The Trades Councils of the country are likely to become increasingly active, and, being composed of every variety from the high and dry Tory to the Revolutionary Socialist, with a big odds on the Socialist for the display of energy; these institutions, too, will become part of the advancing democratic forces making for the Socialisation of industry.

America is pulling up rapidly in Trade Union and Socialist sense, and every victory obtained by them will stimulate our fellows here, and, altogether, we may count upon an exceedingly lively and interesting ten years, by the end of which, we shall probably have established a six hour work day, have raised the age at which children may start work to sixteen years, have wiped out the home industries or sweating

system, provided adequate means whereby none need remain in idleness, shall have Nationalised the Mines and Railways, municipalised the whole of those concerns that directly administer to the general requirements of an ordinary population, and have laid a solid foundation for the building up of an Industrial Commonwealth, where poverty will be unknown, where universal education will be on a very much higher plane than we are familiar with now, and where leisure and true culture shall fall to the common lot of all.

---

# A Programme for a Socialist Parliament.

By H. Russell Smart.

---

The captious critic may, no doubt, consider the framing of a programme for a Socialist Parliament as somewhat premature, seeing that Socialism cannot command even one solitary vote in the House of Commons. If, however, the view be transferred from Parliament to people, the prospect of obtaining a Socialist majority within a reasonably near future does not appear so unpromising. It is true that Socialism, as an organised political force, may not have assumed the enormous proportions into which the alarmed imagination of its opponents had magnified it, yet no intelligent observer will deny that the whole trend of public opinion is steadily in the direction of Collectivism. The Parliamentary contests by which, in the mind of the party man, the fate of the nation is determined, are but one phase, and that the least important of a many-sided movement. All our art, literature and religion are saturated with Socialist thought. The energy of the new-yet-old ideal is convulsing our various social, religious, and labour organisations to their very centres, and the development of the public conscience is causing a mental result on the part

of the youth and intelligence of the nation against the capitalist system and the social evils which are its direct and inevitable outcome. This ferment must sooner or later crystallise into political action.

At first, it is probable that the few Socialist members who may find their way into the House of Commons will be elected without very much attention being paid to any programme either they or their party may put forward, and which, manifestly, cannot be passed into legislation until there is a majority there to do so. But when Socialism has gathered to it the various democratic organisations, which, as Mr. Tom Mann has shown, are driving rapidly toward the Independent Socialist position, then a new cleavage will sunder our political system. Tory and Liberal (even now mere unmeaning shibboleths) will give place to Capital and Labour, and the Socialists, their ranks strengthened by the accession of advanced thinkers from both sides, will become *the* Opposition, and in any future election, will go to the country as an organised force, fighting along the whole line, asking to be entrusted with, and prepared to assume, the reins of Government. When this occurs, the electorate will no longer be content with mere denunciations of the Capitalist system or vague word-pictures of the future Society, however eloquently painted, but will require to have laid before it a definite programme of social and industrial measures, which might reasonably be expected to be passed into legislative effect during the ensuing Parliament, and it will be upon that programme rather than on the abstract Socialist formula, that the appeal to the country will be made.

Though it may seem a truism, the question as to how

far the appeal to the country is likely to be successful, will depend upon the capacity of the party to interpret and express the popular desires. Suggestions such as nationalisation of rent by land purchase, or the socialisation of such monopolies as mines and railways, are reforms which, though desirable enough, would offer small hope of arousing the popular enthusiasm necessary to win elections. The demand of Labour is not so much for a fresh social organisation as for the regulation and adjustment of the existing industrial system, so that humane conditions, leisure and security of life may be assured to all able and willing to do social service.

If the effects of the competitive wage system be considered, three special grievances, out of the many under which the industrial classes suffer, stand prominently forward. They are:

1. Insufficiency and inconstancy of employment.
2. Excessive length of the working day.
3. Insufficient wages to support life in accordance with the requirements of a civilised community.*

The pivot on which the whole Labour problem turns is the insufficiency of employment, and until this question be satisfactory settled, no great democratic advance or moral improvement is, or ever will be, possible.

The unemployed includes many sections and subsections in its ranks, but for present purposes they may be broadly divided into two classes:

1. The efficient, or those temporarily deprived of

* The wages here considered are not the weekly sums, which may be sufficient, but the average earnings of a lifetime.

employment, differing in no way from the others remaining at work.

2. The inefficient, or those who in consequence of physical, mental, and in many cases, moral deficiencies, are incapable of competing on equal terms in the struggle for existence.

In other words, the unemployed consist of a section who are able and willing to work and a section who are either unable or unwilling or both. It is this latter class to which attention is most forcibly directed at our periodical industrial crises. They form the real "unemployed" as distinct from those who merely suffer from temporary want of employment, being chronically more or less without work and living one scarce knows how. It is this class who are the Christs of Labour, vicariously enduring in their own persons all the effects of the moral, social and physical wrong-doing of the capitalist system. But though sympathy would lead us to protect the weak in preference to the strong, yet unhappily no legislation having for its object the rescue of our social wreckage can be successful until the economic burdens that are continually pressing the efficient towards and into the same sea of misery shall have been removed. The inefficient are the drainage of the class above them. A prolonged spell of unemployment, the supersession of skilled labour by machinery,* ill-health or accident, sometimes a temporary lapse from morality, these and a thousand other causes are continually dragging down capable artisans and labourers, and rendering them unfit for their former occupations until they lose hope and become permanently degraded.

* As in the case of the mule spinners, who are now being steadily displaced by the ring frame.

The first matter then to which a Socialist Party should direct its attention should be to legislate, so that permanent employment at regular wages would be obtainable by all *able and willing* to work.

This desirable result might be achieved by an Act —entitled shortly "The Right to Work"—empowering every adult citizen willing and able to conform to a specified standard of efficiency and discipline to demand employment from the Council of his town or district under the following conditions, which public opinion has already approved as the moral minimum for a healthy existence.

1. The working day should not exceed eight hours;
2. Recognised Trade Union wages should be paid, with a statutory minimum of sixpence per hour. *

In studying the probable economic effects of such a measure the first question that suggests itself is the difficulty the local authorities would experience in finding remunerative employment for the surplus labourers. One of the readiest means would suggest itself by the fact that many of the unskilled town labourers are skilled agriculturists. There are large tracts of uncultivated or insufficiently cultivated land in the rural districts, and the probable solution would be for the local authorities to purchase such land as was required, compulsory powers being given them for the purpose, and engage in agriculture. This would be no new departure in public enterprise. Many large towns,

* It is not suggested that a man must be provided with work at his own trade, which in the case of magistrates, lawyers, and policemen, etc., is manifestly impossible When, however, he is employed at his own trade, he should be paid the recognised wages.

notably Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, already own and work extensive tracts of land for the disposal of their sewage, and on these considerable crops have been raised.

There is no apparent reason why a further extension of the principle should not prove equally successful. When the resources of our municipalities are considered,—the ample capital they would have at command, the economy of farming large areas, the scientific direction and improved methods and machinery they could adopt, above all, perhaps, the abolition of the various middlemen, the prospect seems afforded that in this, as in many other cases, the state might be successful where private enterprise has failed, and might bring about the revival of what is still our chief national industry.

According to Mulhall, the average product of an agricultural labourer in the United Kingdom, even under our present inefficient system, amounts to £98 a year. It does not seem, therefore, an unreasonable assumption that the local authorities, with the advantages enumerated, would be able to raise value on the municipal farms at least equal to the wages' interest on the purchase money and other expenses, even should there be no surplus profits for the maintenance of a parasite class.

The revival of agriculture would cause a steady flow of the town population back to the rural districts. The village life and industries would spring again into being, whilst the congestions of the towns would be relieved. A vigorous demand for buildings of all descriptions would arise in the country districts, and for the demolition of the abandoned slums in the cities, and the laying out of the sites as open

spaces. The organisation of building departments on the lines that have proved so successful in the case of the London County Council would follow as a natural course. From that to the manufacture of bricks and other building materials would be to merely follow the tendency of modern industrial development in bringing all the various processes of production under the one control.

Again, it is customary for the State, the municipalities, and the larger capitalist corporations, to clothe their employees. Tailoring departments could be organised, which would employ large numbers of men, or more probably women, so that one of the most sweated of industries could be revolutionised. The Government already has its clothing factory for soldiers; the L.C.C., when it gets control of the police, contemplates a similar extension of public activity, and there is no reason why every municipality in the country, when it has a sufficient number of employees to make it worth while, should not follow their example.

All of this increased production would be in consequence of the new demand occasioned by the employment of the now enforced idlers, it would, therefore, not interfere with the ordinary trade of the country, but would represent fresh sources of employment for all concerned.

From these suggestions it will be seen that the remunerative employment of the efficient applicants need present no insuperable difficulties. Earnestness, ability, and devotion to their civic duties, would undoubtedly be required from our civic fathers, but these are qualities that have never been lacking in the English character. The enlarged perception of social duty which is even now revo-

lutionising public life will we trust cause our State administrators of the future to be as diligent and successful in the public service as they are now in seeking their own individual and selfish advantage.

There would still remain the inefficients. The case of those incapacitated from old age or sickness, who to-day form no inconsiderable portion of the class, would be met by the State pension scheme, to be presently considered. The remainder should be provided for in labour-reforming colonies or industrial homes, in which habits of industry and sobriety would be enforced.

As this proposal has already been dealt with by Prof. A. R. Wallace, it is unnecessary to enlarge upon it, except to point out that these colonies would have to be of various grades, and with varying degrees of discipline, ranging from the tender care necessary to build up the characters of our social weaklings, to the sterner, yet still humanitarian control, necessary for the reform of the loafer and the semi-criminal.

The causes that recruit our submerged tenth having been permanently stopped, the class itself might be expected to finally disappear.

It is when we come to consider the effect in the general position of labour that the advantages of the measure become most apparent.

The possession of this power to demand employment would soon cause a readjustment of industrial conditions. It may be assumed with tolerable certainty that private employers would be unable to obtain the labour they required unless they offered inducements at least equal to those obtainable from the local authority. Therefore, the first result of

the Act would be to establish, not merely in the Municipal workshops, but throughout the industrial system generally,

Permanent Employment,
An Eight Hours' Day,
A minimum wage of 24s. per week,

These conditions being available for men and women alike.

Not only would wages and hours be thus automatically levelled up to a living standard, but the unnecessary butchery caused by dangerous and insanitary occupations would be prevented, for the Trade Unions being then largely relieved of the burden of maintaining the rate of wages at subsistence level, would add to their other duties those of the sanitary and factory inspector. The regulation of industrial life would then be undertaken by the workers themselves, who, from the nature of things, are the most capable of dealing with the many delicate and intricate difficulties with which each and every trade is surrounded.

The only serious argument which the opposition could advance, would be the statement that the margin of profit is too small to grant the required conditions, and yet leave sufficient surplus to induce the capitalists to continue the machinery of production. Even could it be shown that the capitalist system would break down under the added strain, it would be an argument for a bolder and more drastic policy, rather than one of *laissez faire*, for it would be an admission on the part of the capitalists themselves that the existing economic system is unable to afford even the moderate standard of comfort laid down as necessary.

A brief inquiry, however, into the relation of wages to cost of production will be sufficient to show that this objection could not be seriously supported.

In a number of our staple trades there would be little or no alteration. In cotton, engineering, printing, building, and many other industries the weekly wages are already in excess of the suggested minimum, and employment, though it may slightly fluctuate, does not do so to such an extent as to present any insuperable difficulty in employers engaging and paying their manual workers on the same permanent footing as they now do their official staff, their mortgagees and landlords. The experience, too, we have had of former reductions in the hours of labour, including recent experiments with the eight hours system (of which the returns just to hand from the Post Office are themselves almost conclusive) seem to show that in manufacture the general establishment of a forty-eight hours week would be likely to result in cheaper rather than dearer production. A lengthy investigation over the whole economic field is impossible within the scope of this article, but three of our more important occupations in which the wages average below the suggested minimum, may be taken as test cases.

The industry in which the increased cost of labour would be greatest would be that of agriculture. Mr. Giffen estimated the wages of the rural labourers of Gt. Britain in 1880 at sums varying from 12s. a week in Monmouth to 17s. 6d. in Yorkshire. The average at the present day, including all extras, is not more than 14s. Assuming there was no increase in the efficiency of the labourers from the better economic conditions, the operation of the Act would cause an increase of at least 70 per cent. in the cost of agricultural labour; could British farmers, in the face of foreign competition, bear this increased cost of production and yet survive. In a Parliamentary return, furnished by

the Board of Trade in 1891 on "The Relation of Wages to Cost of Production," a list of farms is given, showing the value of the produce, total expenditure, cost of labour, etc. In regard to twelve of these (typical cases) both the rent and cost of labour is given, of which the totals are: Rent, £7,779*; Labour, £5,975. In the same return, the total estimated amount paid in wages to all the agricultural labourers is given for 1878 and 1888. If we compare these figures with "Schedule A" of the Income Tax returns, giving the rentals paid to the landowners in these two years, the comparison comes out:

| | 1878 | 1888 |
|---|---|---|
| Labour | £58,000,000 | £50,000,000 |
| Rent | 69,300,000 | 61,000,000 |

Mulhall also values the average yearly product of the agricultural labourers at £98 per head.

From these figures, officially presented by a strong supporter of the existing economic methods, it is evident that there is an ample reserve in the sum now paid for the mere permission to cultivate the soil to allow a rise in wages far higher than that suggested. Even should the capitalist farmer be unable to cope with the new requirements no great harm would result, for the local authorities with their extended powers would step in and either cultivate the land themselves or let it to cultivators working either individually or co-operatively.

If the statistics of coal-mining be investigated the same facts are in evidence. The total output of coal in 1894 was 88,277,525 tons, of the value of £62,729,760. This was the product of the labour of 705,240 men, women, and boys.

* In a few of these rates, taxes and tithes are included.

The miner himself, *when regularly employed*, earns more than the required minimum, and, therefore, as far as the underground workers are concerned, the only effect would be to relieve the mines of the super-abundance of labour, and cause the remainder to be steadily employed all the year round. The cost of supplying the extra labour for the shorter day and raising the wages of those below the statutory level, would probably, therefore, not exceed £5,000,000 a year, raising the cost of labour from about £30,000,000 a year to £35,000,000, and leaving a balance of nearly £28,000,000 for official expenses, middlemen, royalty owners, and dividends.

Lastly, the published returns of the Railway Companies may be taken. The Railway Companies employ about 400,000 men and lads, of whom 70 per cent do not average more than 20s. per week. To raise the wages of these to a minimum of 24s. would cost the companies in round figures an additional £3,000,000 a year, and the cost of establishing an eight hours day over the whole railway system has been estimated at about £5,000,000. The extra cost of working the lines under the new conditions would, therefore, amount to about £8,000,000 a year. The total revenue of the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom for 1894 was £84,310,831. Of this sum £47,208,313 was spent in working and maintaining the system, leaving a balance of £37,102,518, or 44·6 per cent. of the receipts as profits. This, spread over the capital invested, amounted to a dividend of 3·77 per cent. The establishment, therefore, of a general eight hours day, and a minimum wage of 24s. a week, would mean a reduction of the surplus to £29,000,000, involving a corresponding reduction of dividend to 3 per

cent., which even then would be a rate of interest which no investor in equally sound securities, is able to obtain.

The statistics of other industries affords similar evidence. Of course provision would have to be made for the revision of contracts. A farmer, who had undertaken a lease, or a builder whose tender had been accepted under the old conditions, would naturally require to reconsider his engagements. This difficulty could be met by the insertion of a clause giving all contractors the option of terminating their agreements within a specified period.

In the case of land or mines, which are just on the margin of cultivation, it might be that an increase in wages would cause the rents or profits to disappear, in which case the landowners, whose only inducement would be destroyed, would probably throw them out of use. This difficulty might be met by investing the local authority with powers to take over and work any unused land or mine after giving a reasonable notice. Should a surplus be realised, it could be handed back to the proprietors. This power would be of enormous value in the case of a lock-out.

Assuming that this and similar superficial objections are surmounted, the statistics quoted are sufficient to show that the staple trades have in them ample capacity of adaptation to the new requirements, and (allowing a reasonable period of grace before the Act came into operation) there need be no perceptible disorganisation of industry; certainly not so much as the employers themselves have occasioned when they have locked out miners, cotton operatives, dockers, or engineers.

It has been assumed in the foregoing argument that the efficiency of labour would remain the same as it now is, but

the results of previous experience would lead us to believe that the increased cost of wages would be more than compensated by the increased output. Modern economic science has clearly established the economy of high wages. English labour is more efficient than that of the Continent, for the reason that it is more highly paid, that is, that the subsistence is higher, and that this is not due to any national superiority is shown by the recent investigations of the Iron and Steel Institute, which have disclosed the fact that the more highly paid Belgian ironworkers is more productive than his British competitor.

"Sir Thomas Brassey found that English navvies employed upon the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, and receiving from 5s. to 6s. a day, did a greater amount of work for the money than French Canadians paid at 3s. 6d. a day; that it was more profitable to employ Englishmen at 3s. to 3s. 6d. upon making Irish railways than Irishmen at 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. A detailed comparison of England, the United States, and the Continent as regards the present condition of the cotton industry, yields the same general results. A comparison between England and the United States shows that in weaving, where wages are much higher in America, the labour is so much more efficient as to make the cost of production considerably lower than in England."* It is a commonplace saying that thirty years ago the wages of the agricultural labourer were so low that he was not even worth the miserable pittance he received. Ordinary observation bears out these statements. The well fed, well housed operative, with moderate hours, is more physically

* "Evolution of Modern Capitalism," by John A. Hobson, M.A., ch. x.

fit for his labour, goes at it with greater pluck, energy, and ingenuity than the underfed, discontented drudge of industry. The higher wages, too, have a tendency to stimulate the introduction of labour-saving processes. The best machinery is always attracted to the more highly paid trades.

The question of industrial conflicts is one that merits treatment at greater length than is here possible. It is evident that the strength of Trade Unionism would be greatly increased, whilst that of the employers would be correspondingly diminished by the destruction of their chief weapon—the whip of starvation. The two parties capital and labour would therefore meet for the first time on equal terms. Freedom of contract, real not illusory, would be established, the old antagonisms would to a large extent disappear, and we might expect that wage boards or courts of arbitration would largely if not entirely supersede the cruel arbitrament of the strike or lockout.

Of secondary importance only to the question of ensuring a fair subsistence to the adult worker, is that of making provision for him when incapacitated by old age, sickness, or accident.

Friendly Societies and other agencies have been of incalculable benefit as far as the better paid class of artisans is concerned, but they have been unable to reach the low-paid workers whose wages are insufficient to purchase the immediate necessities of life, and who, therefore, cannot be expected to further tax themselves to provide for an old age they may never live to reach. The inadequacy of the voluntary agencies to deal with this pressing problem is manifested by the fact that forty-five per cent. of the manual workers who reach the age of sixty-five have to seek pauper relief.

The State already provides a pension for the soldier and the civil servant. A Socialist Parliament would extend this principle to the whole community. Every aged citizen who had done social service, should receive a free pension from the national funds, not from charity but as a right, to which he was justly entitled as deferred payment of services rendered. The age at which the pension should commence might be fixed at fifty-five, and the amount at ten shillings a week, to be afterwards increased as the wealth of the country grew from the organisation and scientific regulation of industry.

The Friendly Societies, instead of as now forming the excuse by which the State evades its responsibilities, would then fall into their proper positions as adjuncts and assistants to it, enabling its members to supplement by the voluntary agencies the maintenance allowance they would secure from Government.

The census returns for 1891 give the number of persons in the United Kingdom of fifty-five years and upwards as 1,876,364. To provide an allowance of ten shillings a week for each of these would involve an annual expenditure of £48,800,000 for old age alone.

The Actuary to the Registry of Friendly Societies in 1884 estimated the total annual loss of work through sickness for males and females between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five at 20,285,266 weeks. If the necessary deduction for those between fifty-five and sixty-five be made, and a fair amount be allowed for official expenses, the extra cost for sick allowance and administration would be something under £10,000,000. The total cost, therefore, of pensioning off our veterans and the sick and wounded of our industrial

battlefields would probably amount to less than £60,000,000.

The third of our larger social problems which would demand immediate attention would be the provision of an adequate maintenance for children. Probably not less than half a million children are attending the schools of the U.K., insufficiently fed, and a far greater number insufficiently clad. Many of them have to support themselves after school hours by hawking in the public thoroughfares, and any advantage they may have gained from the State schools is soon crusted over by the unhealthy teachings of the gutter. Too frequently they join the criminal or pauper classes, and become a financial and moral burden on the community. Yet society owes a duty to the children which is not to be discharged by merely leaving them to their parents' care. Upon their efforts in the future will depend the successful working of the industrial machine. In common justice, then, they should be properly equipped in body as well as mind for the due performance of their social duties.

The particular method by which maintenance would be granted would vary considerably with the age of the children and the district (whether town or country) in which they resided.

For infants, it would probably take the form of an allowance to the mother. For the older children free meals and clothing would be provided in the schools, and for the town populations boarding-schools in the country districts would be desirable. The maintenance would probably be continued to fifteen years of age, before which time no child should be allowed to work for wages.* In the case of ex-

* There is no reason, however, why the children, as part of their educational course, should not produce useful articles, which might be available for their own consumption.

ceptionally gifted children, a system of State scholarships should be provided, which would enable them to prolong their educatiou to the University. The additions to our educational budgets would be very considerable. In 1891 there were over 16,000,000 children of fifteen years of age and under. The cost of their maintenance would not average much less than five shillings a week each. This, in itself, would add a total of £170,000,000 a year to our present School Board expenditure, which, no doubt, would also be increased in many other ways. Large as this amount seems, however, it would not in reality be additional expenditure, but merely the spending by the collective body of parents of a sum not much greater than they are spending to-day individually.

The curious will no doubt desire to know whence the money to defray the expenses of the proposed reforms is to come.

Making due allowance for reductions in expenditure by the abolition of sinecures, the absence of "a spirited foreign policy," and other probable economies, the first Socialist Budget would certainly amount to not less than £300,000,000. Fresh sources of revenue would have to be discovered, and the position of the Socialist Chancellor of the Exchequer would be one of peculiar interest, not unmingled with humour. The objection may be raised that the measures that have been proposed, though not specially restricted to any section of society, has been mainly directed to "coddling the working classes." When, however, the question of finance came to be considered, the wealthy classes would have no reason to complain of any lack of Parliamentary attention.

No taxation has as yet attempted to differentiate

between earned and unearned incomes, yet in common fairness, incomes which depend on personal endeavour should not have to bear the same proportion of the public burdens as those which require no greater exertion than merely "writing a rent receipt, or clipping a coupon from a bond."

It is estimated from statistics compiled by Prof. Leoni Levi, Sir Robert Giffen, and others, that the total combined incomes of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom amount to £1450,000,000 a year. Of this no less than £510,000,000—more than one third—is drawn by the landlords and capitalists for permission to use the land and the accumulated results of the social labour of the past. For this vast sum the plutocrats render no useful service in return, but are "drones in the hive gorging at a feast to which they have contributed nothing."

This fund of rent and interest is peculiarly *social* wealth. It is the result of contemporary labour of hand and brain, but of whose labour in particular it is impossible to say. Being therefore the result of the collective exertions of the whole working community it should be spent for social purposes, and the measures that have been suggested would afford a more desirable method of expenditure than the maintenance of an idle and not too ornamental aristocratic and plutocratic class.

All taxation on articles of food would be swept away, and the national revenue raised by a tax of ten shillings in the £ on unearned incomes. This, at their present value, would realise about £255,000,000 a year,* leaving a balance of

* It is probable that the tax would not actually realise this sum in consequence of the decrease in rent. If this were found to be the case, it would be necessary to fix the tax at a higher rate, bringing us so much nearer the ultimate goal of 20s. in the £.

£45,000,000 to be raised by a graduated tax on all other incomes of over £300 a year and the existing excise duties on alcohol and tobacco, the former of which it is to be hoped would show a constant tendency to disappear owing to the raising of the standard of comfort and morality, and the placing of the drink traffic under direct democratic control.

Thus the tax-collector, who is now looked on very much as a missionary from the nether regions, would then prove to be an angel in disguise, transferring the wealth now drawn from labour by monopoly back into the pockets of those who had produced it, and to whom it should properly belong.

The measures that have been outlined represent what may be anticipated to be the main social and industrial proposals of the first definitely Socialist Parliament. They form the immediate demands of the I.L.P., which to-day voices the organised Labour vote. No doubt, on many points the programme is incomplete, and leaves untouched some of the larger demands of labour, and the more subtle of our social questions. For all that it is a programme of social reform before which the worst of the economic burdens with which the industrial classes are afflicted would disappear; and when Labour had been freed, when there was no longer a man or woman denied the opportunity of working, or capitalist to terrorise him with the whip of starvation, when a fair amount of leisure was secured to all, when our industrial veterans were no longer compelled to seek the reluctant hospitality of the Poor Law Guardians as an alternative to starvation; when there was no longer a hungry urchin to cry shame upon our civilization, then, but not till then, could society begin to devote its attention to those larger and more intricate problems that lie behind the politics of bread and butter.

# The Socialist Ideal in Art.

By William Morris.

---

Some people will, perhaps, not be prepared to hear that Socialism has any ideal of art, for in the first place it is so obviously founded on the necessity for dealing with the bare economy of life that many, and even some Socialists, can see nothing save that economic basis; and moreover, many who might be disposed to admit the necessity of an economic change in the direction of Socialism, believe quite sincerely that art is fostered by the inequalities of condition which it is the first business of Socialism to do away with, and indeed that it cannot exist without them. Nevertheless, in the teeth of these opinions, I assert first that Socialism is an all-embracing theory of life, and that as it has an ethic and a religion of its own, so also it has an æsthetic: so that to everyone who wishes to study Socialism duly, it is necessary to look on it from the æsthetic point of view. And, secondly, I assert that inequality of condition, whatever may have been the case in former ages of the world, has now become incompatible with the existence of a healthy art.

But before I go further I must explain that I use the word *art* in a wider sense than is commonly used amongst us to-day; for convenience' sake, indeed, I will exclude all

appeals to the intellect and emotions that are not addressed to the eyesight; though, properly speaking, music and all literature that deals with style should be considered as portions of art; but I can exclude from consideration as a possible vehicle of art no production of man which can be looked at. And here at once becomes obvious the sundering of the ways between the Socialist and the commercial view of art. To the Socialist a house, a knife, a cup, a steam engine, or what not, anything, I repeat, that is made by man and has form, must either be a work of art or destructive to art. The Commercialist, on the other hand, divides "manufactured articles" into those which are prepensely works of art, and are offered for sale in the market as such, and those which have no pretence and could have no pretence to artistic qualities. The one side asserts indifference, the other denies it. The Commercialist sees that in the great mass of civilised human labour there is no pretence to art, and thinks that this is natural, inevitable, and on the whole desirable. The Socialist, on the contrary, sees in this obvious lack of art a *disease* peculiar to modern civilisation and hurtful to humanity; and furthermore believes it to be a disease which can be remedied.

This disease and injury to humanity, also, he thinks is no trifling matter, but a grievous deduction from the happiness of man; for he knows that the all-pervading art of which I have been speaking, and to the possibility of which the Commercialist is blind, is *the expression of pleasure in the labour of production;* and that, since all persons who are not mere burdens on the community must produce, in some form or another, it follows that under our present system most *honest* men must lead unhappy lives, since their work,

which is the most important part of their lives, is devoid of pleasure.

Or, to put it very bluntly and shortly, under the present state of society happiness is only possible to artists and thieves.

It will at once be seen from this statement how necessary it is for Socialists to consider the due relation of art to society; for it is their aim to realise a reasonable, logical, and stable society; and of the two groups above-named it must be said that the artists (using the word in its present narrow meaning) are few, and are too busy over their special work (small blame to them) to pay much heed to public matters; and that the thieves (of all classes) form a disturbing element in society.

Now, the Socialist not only sees this disease in the body politic, but also thinks that he knows the cause of it, and consequently can conceive of a remedy; and that all the more because the disease is in the main peculiar, as above-said, to modern civilsation. Art was once the common possession of the whole people; it was the rule in the Middle Ages that the produce of handicraft was beautiful. Doubtless, there were eyesores in the palmy days of mediæval art, but these were caused by destruction of wares, not as now by the making of them: it was the act of war and devastation that grieved the eye of the artist then; the sacked town, the burned village, the deserted fields. Ruin bore on its face the tokens of its essential hideousness; to-day, it is prosperity that is externally ugly.

The story of the Lancashire manufacturer who, coming back from Italy, that sad museum of the nations, rejoiced to see the smoke, with which he was poisoning the

beauty of the earth, pouring out of his chimneys, gives us a genuine type of the active rich man of the Commercial Period, degraded into incapacity of even wishing for decent surroundings. In those past days the wounds of war were grievous indeed, but peace would bring back pleasure to men, and the hope of peace was at least conceivable; but now, peace can no longer help us and has no hope for us; the prosperity of the country, by whatever "leaps and bounds" it may advance, will but make everything more and more ugly about us; it will become more a definitely established axiom that the longing for beauty, the interest in history, the intelligence of the whole nation, shall be of no power to stop one rich man from injuring the whole nation to the full extent of his riches, that is, of his privilege of taxing other people; it will be proved to demonstration, at least to all lovers of beauty and a decent life, that private property is public robbery.

Nor, however much we may suffer from this, if we happen to be artists, should we Socialists at least complain of it. For, in fact, the "peace" of Commercialism is not peace, but bitter war, and the ghastly waste of Lancashire and the ever-spreading squalor of London are at least object-lessons to teach us that this is so, that there is war in the land which quells all our efforts to live wholesomely and happily. The *necessity* of the time, I say, is to feed the commercial war which we are all of us waging in some way or another; if, while we are doing this, we can manage, some of us, to adorn our lives with some little pleasure of the eyes, it is well, but it is no *necessity*, it is a luxury, the lack of which we must endure.

Thus, in this matter also does the artificial famine of

inequality, felt in so many other ways, impoverish us despite of our riches; and we sit starving amidst our gold, the Midas of the ages.

Let me state bluntly a few facts about the present condition of the arts before I try to lay before my readers the definite Socialist ideal which I conceive for the future. It is necessary to do this because no ideal for the future can be conceived of unless we proceed by way of contrast; it is the desire to escape from the present failure which forces us into what are called "ideals": in fact, they are mostly attempts by persons of strong hope to embody their discontent with the present.

It will scarcely be denied, I suppose, that at present art is only enjoyed, or indeed thought of, by comparatively a few persons, broadly speaking, by the rich and the parasites that minister to them directly. The poor can only afford to have what art is given to them in charity; which is of the inferior quality inherent in all such gifts—not worth picking up except by starving people.

Now, having eliminated the poor (that is, almost the whole mass of those that make anything that has *form*, which, as before-said, must either be helpful to life or destructive of it), as not sharing in art from any side, let us see how the rich, who do share in it to a certain extent, get on with it. But poorly, I think, although they are rich. By abstracting themselves from the general life of man that surrounds them, they can get some pleasure from a few works of art; whether they be part of the wreckage of times past, or produced by the individual labour, intelligence, and patience of a few men of genius of to-day fighting desperately against all the tendencies of the age. But

they can do no more than surround themselves with a little circle of hot-house atmosphere of art hopelessly at odds with the common air of day. A rich man may have a house full of pictures, and beautiful books, and furniture, and so forth; but as soon as he steps out into the streets he is again in the midst of ugliness to which he must blunt his senses, or be miserable if he really cares about art. Even when he is in the country, amidst the beauty of trees and fields, he cannot prevent some neighbouring landowner making the landscape hideous with utilitarian agriculture; nay, it is almost certain that his own steward or agent will force him into doing the like on his own lands; he cannot even rescue his parish church from the hands of the restoring parson. He can go where he likes and do what he likes outside the realm of art, but there he is helpless. Why is this? Simply because the great mass of effective art, that which pervades all life, *must* be the result of the harmonious co-operation of neighbours. And a rich man has no neighbours—nothing but rivals and parasites.

Now the outcome of this is that though the educated classes (as we call them) have theoretically some share in art, or might have, as a matter of fact they have very little. Outside the circle of the artists themselves there are very few even of the educated classes who care about art. Art is kept alive by a small group of artists working in a spirit quite antagonistic to the spirit of the time; and they also suffer from the lack of co-operation which is an essential lack in the art of our epoch. They are limited, therefore, to the production of a few individualistic works, which are looked upon by almost everybody as curiosities to be

examined, and not as pieces of beauty to be enjoyed. Nor have they any position or power of helping the public in general matters of taste (to use a somewhat ugly word). For example, in laying out all the parks and pleasure grounds which have lately been acquired for the public, as far as I know, no artist has been consulted; whereas they ought to have been laid out by a committee of artists; and I will venture to say that even a badly chosen committee (and it might easily be well chosen) would have saved the public from most of the disasters which have resulted from handing them over to the tender mercies of the landscape gardener.

This, then, is the position of art in this epoch. It is helpless and crippled amidst the sea of utilitarian brutality. It cannot perform the most necessary functions: it cannot build a decent house, or ornament a book, or lay out a garden, or prevent the ladies of the time from dressing in a way that caricatures the body and degrades it. On the one hand it is cut off from the traditions of the past, on the other from the life of the present. It is the art of a clique and not of the people. The people are too poor to have any share of it.

As an artist I *know* this, because I can *see* it. As a Socialist I know that it can never be bettered as long as we are living in that special condition of inequality which is produced by the direct and intimate exploitation of the makers of wares, the workmen, at the hands of those who are not producers in any, even the widest, acceptation of the word.

The first point, therefore, in the Socialist ideal of art is that it should be common to the whole people; and this can

only be the case if it comes to be recognised that art should be an integral part of all manufactured wares that have definite form and are intended for any endurance. In other words, instead of looking upon art as a luxury incidental to a certain privileged position, the Socialist claims art as a necessity of human life which society has no right to withhold from anyone of the citizens; and he claims also that in order that this claim may be established people shall have every opportunity of taking to the work which each is best fitted for; not only that there may be the least possible waste of human effort, but also that that effort may be exercised pleasurably. For I must here repeat what I have often had to say, that the pleasurable exercise of our energies is at once the source of all art and the cause of all happiness: that is to say, it is the end of life. So that once again the society which does not give a due opportunity to all its members to exercise their energies pleasurably has forgotten the end of life, is not fulfilling its functions, and therefore is a mere tyranny to be resisted at all points.

Furthermore, in the making of wares there should be some of the spirit of the handicraftsman, whether the goods be made by hand, or by a machine that helps the hand, or by one that supersedes it. Now the essential part of the spirit of the handicraftsman is the instinct for looking at the wares in themselves and their essential use as the object of his work. Their secondary uses, the exigencies of the market, are nothing to him; it does not matter to him whether the goods he makes are for the use of a slave or a king, his business is to make them as excellent as may be; if he does otherwise he is making wares for rogues to sell to fools, and he is himself a rogue by reason of his complicity.

All this means that he is making the goods for *himself*; for his own pleasure in making them and using them. But to do this he requires reciprocity, or else he will be ill-found, except in the goods that he himself makes. His neighbours must make goods in the same spirit that he does; and each, being a good workman after his kind, will be ready to recognise excellence in the others, or to note defects; because the primary purpose of the goods, their *use* in fact, will never be lost sight of. Thus the market of neighbours, the interchange of mutual good services, will be established, and will take the place of the present gambling market, and and its bond-slave the modern factory system. But the working in this fashion, with the unforced and instinctive reciprocity of service, clearly implies the existence of something more than a mere gregarious collection of workmen. It implies a consciousness of the existence of a society of neighbours, that is of equals; of men who do indeed expect to be made use of by others, but only so far as the services they give are pleasing to themselves; so far as they are services the performance of which is necessary to their own well-being and happiness.

Now, as on the one hand I *know* that no worthy popular art can grow out of any other soil than this of freedom and mutual respect, so on the other I feel sure both that this opportunity will be given to art and also that it will avail itself of it, and that, once again, nothing which is made by man will be ugly, but will have its due form, and its due ornament, will tell the tale of its making and the tale of its use, even where it tells no other tale. And this because when people once more take pleasure in their work, when the pleasure rises to a certain point, the expression of it will

become irresistible, and that expression of pleasure is art, whatever form it may take. As to that form, do not let us trouble ourselves about it; remembering that after all the earliest art which we have record of is still art to us; that Homer is no more out of date than Browning; that the most scientifically-minded of people (I had almost said the most utilitarian), the ancient Greeks, are still thought to have produced good artists; that the most superstitious epoch of the world, the early Middle Ages, produced the freest art; though there is reason enough for that if I had time to go into it.

For in fact, considering the relation of the modern world to art, our business is now, and for long will be, not so much attempting to produce definite art, as rather clearing the ground to give art its opportunity. We have been such slaves to the modern practice of the unlimited manufacture of makeshifts for real wares, that we run a serious risk of destroying the very material of art; of making it necessary that men, in order to have any artistic perception, should be born blind, and should get their ideas of beauty from the hearsay of books. This degradation is surely the first thing which we should deal with; and certainly Socialists must deal with it at the first opportunity; *they* at least must see, however much others may shut their eyes: for they cannot help reflecting that to condemn a vast population to live in South Lancashire while art and education are being furthered in decent places, is like feasting within earshot of a patient on the rack.

Anyhow, the first step toward the fresh new-birth of art *must* interfere with the privilege of private persons to destroy the beanty of the earth for their private advantage,

and thereby to rob the community. The day when some company of enemies of the community are forbidden, for example, to turn the fields of Kent into another collection of cinder heaps in order that they may extract wealth, unearned by them, from a mass of half-paid labourers; the day when some hitherto all powerful "pig-skin stuffed with money" is told that he shall not pull down some ancient building in order that he may force his fellow citizens to pay him additional rack-rent for land which is not his (save as the newly acquired watch of the highwayman is)—that day will be the beginning of the fresh new-birth of art in modern times.

But that day will also be one of the memorable days of Socialism; for this very privilege, which is but the privilege of the robber by force of arms, is just the thing which it is the aim and end of our present organisation to uphold; and all the formidable executive at the back of it, army, police, law courts, presided over by the judge as representing the executive, is directed towards this one end—to take care that the richest shall rule, and shall have full licence to injure the commonwealth to the full extent of his riches.

---

# Socialism and Literature.

By Henry S. Salt.

---

The supposed incompatibility of Socialism and Literature is one of those gloomy prognostications which sometimes afflict the spirits of literary men. And it must be frankly admitted that, if there should prove to be any natural antagonism between the two, their collision would indeed be "very awkward" (to repeat George Stephenson's historic saying) for literature, since socialism is a moral and economic force which, once started, is not in the least likely to be deflected from its career. There is however good reason to believe that these anxieties are superfluous: the spread of socialistic principles does not imply the corresponding triumph of vandalism over culture, but rather the reverse; and an estimate of the probable effects of socialism on literature may tend to reassure those who see in the coming nationalisation of letters a still more disquieting phenomenon than the nationalisation of machinery and land.

Slowly, but surely, the new ideal of co-operation is forcing itself more and more on the minds of thoughtful men, and irrevocably displacing the old superannuated formula of internecine competition; already it begins to be apparent that Socialism—the administration of the State in the

interests of the whole, and not a part, of its citizens—is not only ethically just but economically inevitable. Accordingly, we see that a *sauve qui peut* is setting in among those very powers whose authority was most confidently invoked against the revolutionary gospel; for Science, after blustering awhile, is prudently disposed to take up a "scientific frontier" which shall freely admit of future convenient readjustments; while Religion has bethought itself of the very timely consideration that the welfare of the masses is precisely the question which the Churches have most at heart. And what of Literature? It is full time that it, too, should begin to form some clear conception of the part it is prepared to play in the great struggle, and of the position it will hereafter fill. Let us assume, then, that Socialism, in some form or other, is ultimately certain to be realised: to discuss the various forms is beside our present purpose, the one essential feature of any socialistic *régime* being that every citizen would, as a matter of course, be assured of a competent livelihood, while none would be able to inherit or amass any nucleus of inordinate wealth. In a State where riches and poverty were alike unknown, where private simplicity went hand-in-hand with public munificence, where the very notion of self-aggrandisement at the expense of one's fellows was held in utter detestation—what, in such a State, would be the probable condition of literature?

It is noticeable that in the history of every nation a certain stage of artificial society—the stage which sees the accumulation of big fortunes on one side and the pinch of extreme poverty on the other—is accompanied by a corresponding outburst of the *cacoëthes scribendi*, the "itch for authorship," which is the bane of all true literary feeling.

This evil manifests itself in two different directions. First, we have the well-to-do, dilettante authors, who, being blessed with an "independence," to wit, the privilege of living in absolute dependence on the labour of others, are able to indulge their private whims at the expense of the community by writing books which are not wanted, and setting other people to print, publish, distribute, review, and in some cases actually to read them. Secondly, there is the not less mischievous, though personally far less contemptible, class of needy, struggling writers, who have taken to the literary profession, as one might take to a pedlar's or costermonger's business, for the cogent reason that in the break-neck competition of modern society it chanced to offer itself as the readiest means of earning a precarious living. Like the unhappy vendors of boot-laces, matches, and other sweated goods, who importune unwilling purchasers along the pavements of our chief thoroughfares, so do these impecunious scribblers, the guttermen of literature, flood the market with more or less worthless productions, and vie with their wealthier fellow-penmen in swelling the annual bulk of that vast national refuse-heap which is the receptacle for the ceaseless emptyings of our literary dustbins.

The inevitable result of this double process is the grievous degradation of literature. The vast majority of both classes—of the rich men who live to write, and the poor men who write to live—have no natural capacity for the work they have undertaken; there is no distinction or individuality about them which can be held to justify their choice; they are the mere blacklegs of the profession, without purpose and without self-respect, who debase the standard of literary workmanship, and spoil the market for

those craftsmen who have the true artistic gift. For of course it is not to be denied, but rather to be welcomed as a matter for sincerest rejoicing, that there are many such real workers, albeit a small proportion of the entire number, who, in spite of the discouragements of the existing system, do produce good results; though it is important to note that these are usually the men who are not *only* writers, but have some other and more vital interest in the realities of life. At any rate, it is certain that where there is true individuality, where an author has positively something to say and a distinct faculty for saying it, things are at present so arranged as to put him entirely at a disadvantage; he finds himself everywhere jostled and hampered by a crowd of self-seeking adventurers, while the venerable Bumble, who holds the power of the purse, is not usually observed to lend a favourable ear to the promulgators of new opinions. All which things being considered, it is not surprising that a deep pessimism, which is not less unmistakable because it is often veiled in the guise of persiflage, has settled down on our literature.

What then would Socialism do to remedy these evils? To take only that one essential condition of any conceivable socialist State—the certainty that every citizen, man or woman, would be provided with the means of earning a sufficient and honourable livelihood—can it be doubted that this alone would revolutionise the profession of letters? For consider briefly what it implies. While all *necessary* writing work, journalistic, clerical, official, and the like, would be organised and paid on the same scale as any other, there would be an end to the existence of a self-appointed literary class, except possibly where the possession of real talent

gave promise of public utility. Henceforth there would be no idle rich gentlemen, who, for sheer lack of anything better to do, would cumber the world with translations from Horace or Heine, or dissertations on art, or volumes of travels, or (that last indignity) their own "reminiscences." There would be no poverty-stricken quill-drivers, compelled, in defiance of the inward monitor and the public neglect, to "dree their weird" to the bitter end, and write the more because they write in vain. Incalculable would be the benefit of the mere lessening of the number of published books, and a fair field would thus be opened for those authors who are attracted to writing by a natural and spontaneous aptitude. It was long ago discovered by the poet Ovid that the best remedy for blighted love is regular occupation, and it may safely be surmised that the blighted *littérateur* would be directed, in a socialist community, to find comfort in the same infallible prescription. The "itch for authorship" would not survive the establishment of a system where everyone could put his hand, and indeed would be compelled to put his hand, to some wholesome and productive employment; and together with the *cacoëthes scribendi* would vanish, we may reasonably hope, that prevalent habit of morbid introspection and that tone of cultured cynicism which have so largely paralysed the literary strength of the present generation.

In the prophetic sketch which has been given of the organised society of the future by the author of *Looking Backward*, it is observable that a successful writer is permitted to support himself by pen alone, and to claim immunity from the ordinary work which the State requires of its citizens; but Mr. Bellamy, as if conscious that he is

here on perilous ground, is careful to add that the popular judgment, by which success is conferred, would be far less partial and erratic than that of nineteenth-century readers, so that the literary class thus established would be at once a smaller and more efficient one. There is little to be gained by speculating on the minor details of the Socialism of a century hence, which, whatever it may prove to be, will not be the tyranny that its opponents anticipate; but, *pace* Mr. Bellamy, it may be hoped that in a socialised community there will be *no* authors, successful or the contrary, who would desire to be put on a different footing to their fellows. For literature (here I refer to *belles lettres* and the ornamental departments of writing) is not, and never can be, "work" in the ordinary sense of the term, nor can it be made a fair equivalent for such work; and though it may be desirable in special cases, and for stated periods, that certain students should be exempt from other duties, it will be found that in the mass, and in the long run, literature itself degenerates when its professors avail themselves permanently of any such immunity. "Can there be any greater reproach," says Thoreau, "than an idle learning? Learn to split wood at least. Steady labour with the hands, which engrosses the attention also, is unquestionably the best method of removing palaver and sentimentality out of one's style, both of speaking and writing."

Still more difficult would it be, let us hope, for a special class of professional critics to exist under a socialist *régime*; it is hardly conceivable that such a class would *care* to exist in a society where any amount of healthy, useful work was to be had for the asking. To reapply Tennyson's words:

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced, snub-nosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home.

That there will be abundance of free and fearless criticism when every work can be judged on its own merits, and there are no "prudential considerations" to make cowards of us all, is not to be doubted; but it seems improbable in the highest degree that individual men of letters will then be so infatuated as to suppose that their personal judgment can be worth giving to the world, systematically and periodically, on any and every literary topic.

But here it will be objected that "pure literature," being the very flower and consummate expression of thought, must not be thus lightly subjected to the risks consequent on a rough equalisation of civic duties, but must rather be fostered and safeguarded with all possible care; the condition of the people is no doubt the most momentous subject for politician and sociologist, but the interests of "pure literature" are of a still higher and more lasting importance. To which it may fairly be answered that to neglect the material well-being of society, out of a sentimental reverence for an art which is ultimately dependent on that well-being, is to repeat the error of the old woman in the fable, who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs. Pure literature, invaluable treasure though it is, becomes a mockery and a sham, if once men recognise that it is the voice of class supremacy and not of a nation's life, even as at the present time we are more and more recognising that much of our so-called "culture" is based on a hideous sub-

structure of degradation and suffering. A refinement which can ignore the misery around it, or even batten on that misery, is no refinement at all. Our *literæ humaniores* are not humane, and not being humane they are soon found to be illiterate; so that there is real truth in the caustic remark of the satirist Peacock, that "Great indeed must be the zeal for improvement, which an academical education cannot extinguish." Learned professors and busy scientists may shut their eyes to the facts which have made Socialism a necessity, and may elect to play the part of accomplished ostriches in a barren literary wilderness; but the facts are none the less obvious to those who face them. If literature in the future is to be something more than a sickly hothouse exotic, it must draw its sustenance from the subsoil of a just and humanely organised community—which is Socialism.

Equally striking is the contrast between the actual and the possible state of letters when regarded from a purely economic standpoint. At present there is an immense competitive system of production for private interests; books are largely written, printed, and published, not because they contain matter of real value, but because a profit is expected to result from them, which profit usually goes to parties whose share in the work is not literary but commercial. In each grade of the process the same sordid conditions are observable. The publisher too often sweats the author; the author sweats the copyist or literary hack; the printer sweats the printer's devil: then, in many cases, a false market is manufactured by log-rolling, puffing advertisements, and the various devices of the middleman—and lo! another worthless book has been foisted on the reading

public, who, in the confusion thus generated, are naturally rendered more and more incapable of forming a sound and reliable judgment. Thus it is that the whole canon of taste is in great measure distorted, and productions of monumental dulness are artificially exalted into "standard works." "It is among the standing hypocrisies of the world," says De Quincey, in reference to an instance of the kind, "that most people affect a reverence for this book, which nobody reads."

It is pitiable to think of the amount of human labour, mental and physical, that is thus wasted in the production of worthless volumes. An author who has no manner of business to be an author at all writes, let us say, a bad novel, and forthwith gives employment (perhaps with a proud consciousness of stimulating trade) to a number of persons, publishers, printers, reviewers, and others, who, like himself, would be quite capable, in a rationally ordered society, of performing some useful part. Under a socialist system all this would be amended, there would be no unworthy inducements to do bad work in one direction when one could do good work in another, and private extravagance would give way to considerations of public economy. *Editions de luxe* would no longer be issued to mark the crowning degradation of letters; for who would care to waste his substance upon nonsense bound in vellum, when he could buy good literature in cheap and serviceable form? And, finally, the State, which at present spends so much on military armaments that it is compelled to plead its poverty whenever literature asks for a share, would be able, out of its abundant treasury, to endow a handsome library in every town and village, and

to do more for the encouragement of national culture in a single year than can be done in half a century of our hap-hazard, suicidal individualism.

From whatever point of view one looks at this question, it is difficult to resist the conviction that the true lover of literature has nothing to fear, but, on the contrary, everything to hope, from Socialism. The author of *Looking Backward* is of opinion that the adoption of a socialist system would be followed by a revival of letters even greater than the Renaissance—"an era of mechanical invention, scientific discovery, art, musical and literary productiveness, to which no previous age of the world offers anything comparable." Whether this be probable or not, we may at least feel assured that it will be an age of genuine, and not artificially stimulated, production; that there will be an immense improvement in the quality of the books produced, in proportion to their quantity; that there will be no Grub-street to send out bad work on the one side, and no Belgravia on the other; and that the whole of our literature will be informed by a hopeful and helpful spirit of belief in human comradeship, in place of the present pessimistic tone of cynical dilettantism.

Nor is there any reason to doubt, in view of the impending social struggle, that the sympathies of the literary class, even as now constituted, will be in the main with the workers; for, as has been well remarked, "literary men in all ages have been the organs of the *sapienza volgare* or general sentiment of the people." The literary man is the client of Dives, and an excessive consideration for his patron's susceptibilities, and sometimes for his own comfort, has enfeebled the vigour of his thought and dulled the in-

cisiveness of his pen; but he, too, has not seldom known what it is to suffer, and his heart has all along been with his brother Lazarus at the gate. It is now over a century since literature emancipated itself from the thraldom of the individual aristocrat—is it not time that it were also rid of the plutocratic ascendancy? Socialism, while removing the *raison d'être* for a special class of authors, will simultaneously remove the cause of their economic subservience; they will doff their livery as a sect to find their true distinction as a power. Is not this a benefit which should conciliate the literary man? Or is he so enamoured of the present state of his profession as to be inflexibly bent on the perpetuation of the same system for his successors, like Sydney Smith's country gentleman, who, having wasted his own youth in fruitless classical instruction, is resolved that he shall not be the last of a long line of victims?—"Aye, aye, it's all mighty well—but I went through this myself, and I am determined my children shall do the same."

Unless the signs of the times are wholly deceptive, literature, like every other expression of thought, is now approaching a new and critical phase of its development. The existing forms of literary workmanship have been carried, in the hands of a few great masters, to the *ne plus ultra* of technical excellence, and it seems improbable that any further progress will be made on the old lines: a fresh impetus is needed, and this can only be supplied by a new ideal. Whence will this new ideal be forthcoming? Assuredly not from that withered, wrinkled, unlovely creed of pitiless competition which has long made a national literature as impossible as a national art. Not from that

so-called "individualism" which has stultified itself by banishing true individuality from the monotonous death-in-life of the masses. Not from that precious "freedom of contract" which is so mysteriously allied with the worst form of class-slavery. Not from the "gentility" which abnegates gentleness; nor the "independence" which lives on sweated labour; nor the "respectability" which is everywhere ceasing to be respected; nor the beauty-worship which ignores the hideous moral deformities of modern life. There is but one source from which there is the slightest possibility of the new ideal uprising, and that is the growing sense of the universal brotherhood and equality of man. This equality, I need scarcely state, is not the uppish, priggish attempt to be level with one's intellectual superiors, which is periodically deprecated by certain learned professors, who are so steeped in the atmosphere of competition that even their concept of equality is tinged by it; but simply the recognition of the fact that all human beings hold their lives by the same tenure, and that no individual can find true happiness who in his inmost heart can conceive of himself as better or more deserving than the meanest of his fellows.

If anything can put new life into the culture which at present faints and flags under its half-consciousness of the inhuman and sordid conditions of its social environment, it will be this ideal of equality. The literature that will result from the cheering sense of world-wide solidarity and fellowship will be tenfold saner than that which is now supported (I will not say inspired) by the craving for personal distinction or the necessity of somehow earning a living among a host of hungry competitors; furthermore, it will be based

on the rock of actuality and self-knowledge, instead of on the shifting sands of a fastidious and sentimental "refinement." Concurrently with this progress, the general conception of the duties and privileges of authorship will be ennobled and elevated. "The Idea of the Author," said Fichte,* "is almost unknown in our age, and something most unworthy usurps its name. This is the peculiar disgrace of the age—the true source of all its other scientific evils. The inglorious has become glorious, and is encouraged, honoured, and rewarded. According to the almost universally received opinion, it is a merit and an honour for a man to have printed something, merely because he has printed it, and without any regard to what it is which he has printed and what may be its result. They, too, lay claim to the highest rank in the republic of letters who announce the fact that somebody has printed something, and what that something is; or, as the phrase goes, who *review* the work of others. It is almost inexplicable how such an absurd opinion could have arisen."

The literature of the socialised community of the future will surpass that of the present era of unlimited competition by so much as union is stronger than discord, love nobler than hate, and the natural sense of perfect equality with one's fellows a truer and more vital wisdom than the academic culture of oneself.

* *The Nature of the Scholar.* Translated by Wm. Smith.

# A Century of Women's Rights.

By Enid Stacy.

---

I am not proposing within the narrow limits of an article to attempt anything approaching a historical record of the past or a forecast of the future of the so-called "Women's Rights Movement." The history of such an agitation, so important in aims and results, cannot be treated in so cursory a fashion. For the present, I am only endeavouring to point out one or two of the main tendencies of the movement with especial reference to the present position of women.

Among intelligent people it has ceased to be a matter of regret, certainly of surprise, that nineteenth century women are especially interested in the progress of their sex. It is recognised on all sides that the great changes which have swept over the country during the last hundred years, transforming politics, business, social and religious life, must necessarily have had their effect in modifying greatly the condition of women. It is allowed even by lovers of the "good old times," that to acquiesce, even though it be reluctantly, in the changes wrought by the ballot box, the railway, and the factory, and at the same time to declaim vehemently against the entrance of women into political and industrial life, is illogical and absurd.

There are a few belated exceptions to this statement, it is true. We have still a few Mrs. Lynn Lyntons who regard any change of habits or ways of looking at life on the part of women, as impious and dangerous in the extreme, and, whilst willing to accept the march of modern civilisation in all other aspects of life, imagine most foolishly that it can touch men and yet leave women severely alone. To such people the retort is obvious: "You regret the days when the one business of woman was to stay at home and play the part of the meek, retiring angel of the domestic hearth, living only in the smiles of her lord, with fancy work and nursery gossip as her sole relaxations. Very good; but at the same time remember to be logical. You must also go back to the mail coach, the shilling postage, the short waist and poke-bonnet, to the days when 'gentlemen' were not thought disgraced by nightly drunkenness, when an election was only another name for a fortnight's fighting, rioting, drinking, and corruption, when Australia was but a name, bicycles were unknown, and to do the 'grand tour of Europe' was still considered a somewhat remarkable feat. You realise that these days are gone for ever. Most of you welcome the fact; then admit that for women as well as men there must of necessity be changed work, modified ways of living, in conformity with modern requirements."

Viewed in this light the Woman's Rights Movement becomes not an impious attempt on our part to scale the high heaven of our master Man, but a perfectly natural result of the various movements which have agitated and modified the European mind since the French Revolution first brought the words "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" into the whirl of every-day life. In our own country,

one of the most noticeable political and philosophical developments during the early half of the century was Manchesterian Radicalism. Its doctrines now have lost their hold upon us, but in the fifties and early sixties, Free Competition, the glorification of the sphere of the individual at the expense of the State, the *right* of the individual to fight his way in life and come to the front if he could, were still phrases to conjure by, and principles which were of vital effect in moulding life and character. Was it reasonable to expect such a movement, dominating as it did the thought of the middle and lower middle classes, to have no effect in changing the current of women's lives? The woman of those classes naturally began to apply (if even partially) to her own case the words so often spoken by the men of her home circle and acquaintance. She was cramped and confined in her own life. Economic circumstances, the stress of competition, emigration of men, increase of population, and especially of female population, were daily making her old rôle of wife and mother more difficult to play. Many middle-class women found home life impossible, as they could not get husbands! And what remained? The lot of a governess—a painful one even to-day very often—much more so before the "Higher Education of Women" had uplifted socially and intellectually the teacher and the profession. Meanwhile she heard on all hands much talk of "The right of the individual to carve out his own path in life, that all careers should be open to talent, that the individual was the best judge of his own possibilities, that the State's duty, the work of a wise Government, was to break down all barriers and artificial impediments and leave human beings free to compete and

struggle to the front." Was it any wonder that she began to apply this to her own case? She found her lot in life not only unpleasant in itself, but fixed for her by laws and conventions which she attempted to break through by the application of the very principles which were dominating middle class Britain.

Thus the movement—apart from the earlier attempts of Mary Wolstencraft, which failed because the time was not yet ripe—was a simply natural development of the older Radicalism, as may be further seen by some of its leading features.

(1) The Manchesterian movement was mainly a middle and lower middle class movement, and thus the earlier champions of Women's Rights belonged to and fought for their own class. (2) The older Radicals clamoured for the right of a man to fight his way in life. The women claimed the same right, and as the only calling then open to women workers was that of teaching—itself at the time disorganised and inefficient—their first attempts were naturally in the direction of opening up more callings to women—trade, business life, the professions, etc. This involved a re-construction of the teaching profession, and a cry for better education for girls was raised, at first somewhat feebly, afterwards with increasing success, followed at last by the partial entrance of women into those strongholds of the old-time spirit, the universities. The movement was thus in this earlier stage both middle class and individualistic, its chief strength lying in the claim of the individual woman to the right of fighting her way in life and supporting herself by her own exertions. As a natural result, the agitation was almost entirely carried on by unmarried women, and in

much that was said and written by them or on their behalf a strong "anti-man" and "anti-marriage" tone was observable. The type of woman to be first affected by the movement was not the ordinary home-loving, unthinking woman, but a more resolute, intellectual, and strongly-marked individuality. Feeling certain latent powers stirring within her, her first thought was how to obtain effectual means for developing them. From married life she was practically shut out—the state of the English law and the customs of society at the period reducing a married woman to the condition of a mere piece of goods in her husband's house; her person, her property, her children, his entirely and without appeal. Surely this is sufficient to account for many of the denunciations of marriage which, to our minds, marred much of the earlier emancipators' work. They were often perfectly correct in describing the lot of the average married woman as a degrading slavery, in which they ought, as self-respecting women, to have no share.

Again, as pioneers, their work—the necessary work of opening out fresh and congenial fields to women workers—brought them constantly into conflict with men; and it must be admitted that for twenty years women found every obstacle placed in their path through men's desire (natural enough, no doubt) to preserve all the best-paid and most honourable callings for their own exclusive benefit. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that many pioneers of the movement, debarred from domestic life by choice or necessity, engaged in a harassing and uphill conflict with the world (a conflict in which the majority of men, with some honourable exceptions, proved their most bitter opponents), became somewhat hardened in manners and aggressive in

tone, and lost occasionally some distinctive graces and charms of womanhood. The comic papers of that day would have been in sad plight had they had no angular, raw-boned, spectacled, gaunt, limply-clad, man-hating spinsters to jeer at. It was certainly unfortunate for the cause that some of its prominent fighters in the early days cared but little for the attractions of the "outer woman," and it probably delayed progress. Under the circumstances, however, it was inevitable, and to us women of a later day, now enjoying some of the fruits of these brave women's labours, more than pardonable.

The movement was too great to long confine itself to the problem of opening out new careers for unmarried middle-class women. The more clear-sighted friends of the agitation saw that by the very nature of things the majority of women would always be wives and mothers, and that no movement of emancipation would be successful unless it touched the status of the married woman.

The fight then speedily drifted into the political field. The cry for the franchise for women, raised in Parliament in 1867, became louder and louder, until the cause seemed likely at one time to become purely one for the obtaining of the Parliamentary suffrage. In '67, however, the cry was "Votes for unmarried women who are taxpayers and property owners." When the opponents of women's suffrage were at a loss for arguments (which was generally the case!), and had come to an end of even their ample store of abuse, they retorted with some force on the middle-class spinster emancipators, that to be logical the suffrage must be extended to the married women, as the "man-made

law," injured the married woman far more than the spinster. Although at the time most of the leaders of the movement repudiated "such an extreme suggestion," the force of circumstances and the economic development of the century were modifying and widening the whole scope of the woman movement, and in 1884, when the whole question of female suffrage was thoroughly debated in the Commons, it is instructive to mark the results of this widening influence. The question had been placed upon a broader basis, not woman's *rights*, as a middle-class spinster, with a livelihood to fight for, against hostile male forces, but woman's *duties*, not only as a spinster, but also as a wife and mother, and, in order that she may amply fulfil these duties, her freedom as an individual and her equality as a citizen.

I do not think the reason for this change or widening of front is far to seek. I trace it to the latter political and economic developments of the century. In the sixties the notions of individual rights still held sway, seemingly undisturbed by the beginnings of that social legislation whose underlying principle was Socialistic, not individualistic, in character. But, by the time the eighties had fairly set in, the gospel of individual rights, sorely battered by State education, municipal Socialism, factory laws, and, like "tyrannies," was in a dying condition, and to-day only some few belated individuals, having the courage to own even old-fashioned convictions, raise a voice in its favour. Whilst the idea of social duties was slowly undermining that of individual rights, women's power and influence was steadily increasing. This was largely due to the effects of that education so indefatigably fought for by the early women's

righters, partly to an improved public opinion, which, in its re-action upon politics, resulted in the great triumph of 1882, the Married Women's Property Act, well called the Magna Charta of British Married Women. Still even at so late a date the movement, though no longer confined to single women, was more middle class than anything else. Now the labour question began to loom large before the public eye, transforming politics, political economy, and social ethics.

The "Woman's Rights" movement could not long remain untouched. The leaders of the working-class agitation were nearly all Socialists, and therefore believers in equality between men and women *at least in theory*, however many traces of the Old Adam might show themselves from time to time in their actual conduct. Although occasionally their natural temperament may have inclined them as men to take Conservative views of the woman question, they found it difficult, nay impossible, to square such views logically with the Socialist position: so often at first against their natural bent they found themselves taking perforce an "emancipated" view of the question. Again, not only as Socialists by force of logic, but as Trade Unionists by force of the practical pressure of circumstances, the labour leaders found it necessary to attempt to cope with the huge question of women's labour. The whole economic tendency of the century had been towards the inclusion of ever larger numbers of working women in the industrial ranks. It is useless to rail against such a state of things even if we would. It is a necessary result of machine industry. Attempts legislative and otherwise have been made to stop or check the growing numbers of women wage-

workers, but with scant success in most instances. Much of the early factory legislation would, it was thought by many, decrease the number of women employed through enforcing legal restrictions upon their labour which did not apply to men. In most cases, however, the results were surprisingly different. The direct restrictions on women proved to be indirectly binding on men, to the benefit of all workers in the trade. These well known facts are made the very most of by modern trade unionists in their endeavours to still further "protect" women's labour. It is even probable that many of men's attempts to help women to organise have their origin rather in the desire to improve the condition of the male worker than to lift up the female. But without troubling ourselves about motives the fact is important for us that the movement in which the question of women's labour, women's chances of bettering their economic position, women's claims to a higher social status and political equality have been most sympathetically treated is the Labour movement, especially in the purely Socialist section thereof.

The results of the working-class agitation of late years upon the Women's Rights Movement have been most marked. It has practically broken it up into two divisions, which, for the sake of convenience, I shall call the Individual Rights and Social Duties sections respectively. The first section represents more of the older influences, which at first gave birth to the movement; it still stands for the ideal of the rights of the individual as against Society, and, applying this to the case of women, clamours for no more factory legislation to "protect" women's labour, and no nterference on the part of the State with a woman's right

to earn her livelihood in the way and under the conditions she thinks best. In its attempts to obtain the suffrage for women, it is still concerned in making property ownership or direct taxpaying the sole conditions of citizenship, and the argument best beloved by its adherents is the injustice done to "a lady of quality, social position, and education, in debarring her from the privilege of voting, whilst her uneducated gardener and dependent can have the right of electing the legislature which will frame laws she has to obey, though allowed no voice in making them." This pathetic appeal always enlists the sympathy of the "ladies of property and education," who belong to this section of the emancipation movement! I do not think I shall be doing any injustice to the Individual Rights section if I call it practically a middle and upper middle class organisation, for I have failed to find that it has any hold upon any considerable section of women belonging to the lower middle or working classes. The second section can, perhaps, hardly be described as one definitely organised body. It is composed rather of many bodies of women, all more or less realising the importance of improving the status of women *in order that they may the better fulfil their duties to Society*. These sections, in their fight for the suffrage, desire it for working women as well as middle-class women, demanding the vote on the ground that wifehood and motherhood in themselves imply the most important civic duties and responsibilities, and to carry out such functions properly for the good of the community, as well as in the name of the individual, the State needs thoughtful, capable women, and that such women can not be obtained under social conditions that tend rather to foster either dolls, ignoramuses, or

despairing drudges. The franchise is claimed for women *as women*, whether in the capacity of industrial or domestic workers, but not as an end in itself, only as one of the means towards the end, an indispensable means truly, but still only a means.

But the believers in this later development of the Emancipation movement realise how untenable is any position which claims a citizen's status without fulfilling a citizen's duties. *One* of the most important duties a woman can fulfil is to bear and educate the State's future citizens. It is freely admitted that a mother's duties demand an ample development, mental and physical, for the mother, which involves full citizenship, freedom, and equality; and that the rearing of children does not exhaust the whole of a woman's lifetime. But even granting these points, the great importance of motherhood, from the citizen's standpoint, remains. If, then, it can be proved that certain work, or certain conditions of work, under which married women, or prospective mothers, are working, is injurious and dangerous to mother and child, then it is not only the State's right, but duty, to interfere and prevent the murder of future citizens, even by restrictive laws, if necessary. I am aware that this view may be somewhat hotly contested by some emancipators, who can hardly be said to belong to the middle-class individualistic section, but surely it is possible to harmonise the just claims of the individual woman for power to develop, and the just claims of the State on behalf of all its children alike? On the one hand it might be conceded to the more individualistic section of the movement:—

1. That the freedom of the middle class woman could only have been obtained by means of the actual methods

used, viz.: a breaking down, by competition, agitation, etc., of the barriers which prevented the individual woman from testing her strength and merit in callings (chiefly professional) which had hitherto been appropriated solely by men. Here surely "interference" would have been a mistake, and would have curtailed freedom and been a disaster to the cause of education and progress. At the same time it must be pointed out clearly that interference with the labour of most working-class women under modern industrialism so far from diminishing their freedom actually increases it. It is so difficult to get a middle-class woman to see this. She has had to get her freedom by constantly asserting and struggling to obtain the right to work at a calling which she preferred to all others. There is frequently a desire to do the work—and the words, "freedom of choice," are no empty mockery. The case of many working-class women is far otherwise. They work at the first trade that offers itself, not from individual choice, but sheer pressure of circumstances. There is no free choice about it as there frequently is in the case of the middle-class woman. Anything, then, whether trade unionism or legislation, which, by its interference with her nominal liberty, gives her greater leisure, higher wages, better health, is increasing her real actual freedom, and helping to *develop her individuality*. The aim in both cases is the same; the methods frequently differ.

2. As far as it is possible, the legislature should regulate men's labour when it regulates women's. I say as far as possible advisedly, for certain regulations pertaining directly to women as mothers prospective and actual naturally affect women alone. But where women and men work together at the same trade many more rules might be made

applicable to both sexes than is the case at present. This is especially true where hours of labour and overtime are involved. The more these necessary restrictions are used to apply to both sexes instead of one only, the less resistance there will be to continued factory legislation by even the more old-fashioned Women's Righters.

On the other hand it must not be forgotten that the State has a perfect right to interfere with the individual citizen should it be necessary to do so to ensure the well being of the community. Without the State or Society the individual would be but the sorriest and most forlorn of creatures. Nearly everything that makes life pleasant or ennobling comes from one's connection with the community. To ensure the welfare of the community then, even in the individual's interests is the main consideration; and for this end the individual's absolute right to do as he likes must be curtailed. A very great injustice, however, will be done women if State interference deals with them intimately and leaves men pretty much alone. Socialists urge that the State has power to regulate individuals *quâ* individuals, but not *quâ* women. Unless this distinction is carefully borne in mind by legislators it will be possible to again tie down women under the guise of benefiting the community. The community must claim the right to a like interference with men wherever necessary, and as a further preventative against injustice the demand for the franchise for women as well as men must be brought to a successful issue (though it would be very doubtful wisdom to reject any further reform which would benefit women until they should get the vote!)

This recognition of the claims of the community will

lead us, I think, to a further distinction between what is our ultimate aim and what is at present permissible. It will be generally granted by friends of all sections of the Emancipation movement that their aim is to give each woman power to develop her own individuality, particularly in respect to her life's work. The perfect state will only be reached when each human being is doing the work he or she can do best, irrespective of hard and fast sex distinctions. But at the present juncture, when we are passing through the transition from Commercialism to Collectivism, it may be inadvisable and impossible to give each woman this perfectly unfettered choice. To most people the nail and chain making in the Black Country by women and girls is a disgrace to England, and many counsel the prohibition of women's labour in such an industry altogether. The lead industry is another example. Now, it is folly to argue that most of the women who do this work do it of their own free choice—they would be probably distinctly better off and *freer* if it were forbidden by law. There *may* be a few who actually prefer it to any other. At the present time it seems to be their duty to submit to regulations which will help the more easy and speedy transition to a time when an unfettered choice will be a *reality* in industry.

Much has been done during the present century to make life for women happier, freer, and more worthy of intelligent, self-respecting human beings. Public opinion has largely altered for the better; education for women has progressed, and is steadily progressing; women have obtained entrance into many eminently suitable callings, chiefly by their own brave efforts; they have gained a strong footing in Local Self-Government; they now, as

married women, control and administer their own property or results of their earnings; and are even recognised as legal guardians of their children! On the whole, they are stronger and more vigorous both in mind and body than in the days when the typical heroine of the public was the timid, shrinking, fragile, blushing miss of seventeen, with floating ringlets, and a die-away expression, who fainted more or less gracefully at least once in each volume of the novel. But much remains to be done. Without venturing to prophesy or paint the ideal status of women in the various Utopias now floating about in so many reformers' minds, it will be safe to point out some of the developments which are not only historically probable but indispensable in the opinion of the believers in the powers and duties of women as citizens. No friends of the movement will be satisfied until women are free :—

1. As individual women. The right to their own persons, and the power of deciding whether they will be mothers or not. The law actually denies even this elementary right to married women at present!
2. As wives. Perfect equality and reciprocity between husband and wife. This necessitates legal changes, notably as regards the Law of Divorce; *e.g.*, whether the law be made laxer or more stringent it must affect both sexes alike.
3. As mothers. Guardianship of their children on the same terms as in the case of fathers. Much has been done here, but the law is still somewhat unfair to women.

4. As citizens. The possession of the imperial as as well as local franchise, and full citizens' rights.
5. As workers. (*a*) For the present—whilst admitting the necessity of much regulation and many restrictions—to make as many of such regulations as possible applicable to both sexes. (*b*) Ultimately to obtain such a co-operative commonwealth as will ensure to each citizen, irrespective of sex, a choice of employment indicated by the results of education and only limited by individual capacity.

The watchword of the movement in future will, I think, be no longer "Women's Rights." The true aim of reformers is to consider neither Men's nor Women's rights *quâ* men and women, but to secure to each human being such conditions as will conduce to full development as an individual and a useful life of service to the community.

# MEANS AND ENDS IN EDUCATION.

BY MARGARET McMILLAN.

---

THE FIRST QUESTION is, "Why are we going to educate children at all?" It is a very pertinent question, and educationists always take the greatest care to answer it, so that we are not left in doubt.

It is curious to compare the answers: they are so various! Many of them very frank, guileless indeed, in their quiet acceptance of children as means to an end. In England, in the sixteenth century—that is to say quite recently—Sturm, an educational authority, stated that the end of teaching was threefold, "piety, the giving of knowledge, and the art of expression." That condition was believed for a long time to be final, yet modern educationists have discarded it. Ask a representative authority to-day what the end of education is, and you will almost certainly hear something about "foreign competition." Piety will not be mentioned (though there is a religious question), nor the giving of knowledge (for that smacks of cramming), and the art of expression is recognised as a danger and a snare.

Yet, who knows? Perhaps our modern definition will go the way of many others. Everything points to the transitoriness of systems and definitions, framed only with a view to immediate exigencies and supposed needs. People

educated to be soldiers, have been so often beaten by untrained hordes. People educated as scholars pushed aside by men who had not studied letters—but other things! People educated to be artizans run some risk surely of sharing the same fate. In any case, safely progressive educationists have to consider the child as a child. That is to say, they have to cease thinking of what his chances in life are, and to consider what his power in life is.

In the days when children were treated as receptacles for useful knowledge, the duty of the teacher was clear. He had to put something into his pupil. He had to form him; and above all he had to whip something, viz. (the Old Adam) out of him. The fact that every child, nay, that even every nerve cell in a child has a form of its own, was overlooked. Perhaps the reason of this oversight lay in the fact that the old-world educationist had a form in his mind, just as the new educationist has a trade in his mind. However, the people got a glimpse of the artificial form at last, in fiction. Charles Dickens painted 'Paul Dombey,' an artificially formed child. Poor little Paul's portrait is not revolting. We are not shocked by it, as we are shocked by the thought of those mutilated little beings who once formed a part of the train of every great Court lady; and yet, in considering Paul, many people who had never heard of nerve-cells began to perceive that the artificial form of child is not equal to the natural. And so they began to give ear to Froebel. Froebel, who called his school a garden! A garden. That is to say, a place where, by the grace of God, everything might find, more or less, its own shape.

Now the word "garden" is a poetic one, but it is such a suggestive word, and expresses so justly what the ideal of

any school ought to be that it is to be hoped we shall keep and translate it into every language by-and-bye. For educationists have to do mainly as educationists *with the nervous system of a child*. And what is the central nervous system, with its cell walls, but the trunk of a most wonderful tree? From the young nerve cell, as from a seedling, little branches or *dendrons* sprout out; later, collateral branches appear, the branches increasing in number as we rise in the scale of life. In the fully-developed nerve cells of man, the branches are very numerous and the form quite unmistakable, but, indeed, there is no question about the *form* of the cells in *any* stage of development. We have seen such forms in the unraked garden-paths, or spread in dark tracery against the winter sky. Forms of leaf, seedling, branch, and root. The human tree is, of course, particularly sensitive, and reaches a world of stimuli, to which the forest king is insensible. But in spite of this, the physiologist, like the half-blind man of old, sees all men, literally, *as trees walking*.

Now these pathways for impulses have, of course, a goal—the brain. It is there that the awakening takes place. And what a reveille it is, at least during the first five years of life! One nervous centre after another is roused; the child begins to see or rather to "notice," to hear, to recognise the "feel" of various objects, and, close following on the development of those nerve centres concerned in sight, etc., is the birth of mind and will. It is natural to suppose that a further development of the same nerve centres and others would result in an increase of intelligence. Of this Froebel was convinced. "Space" he demanded, and "time" and "rest," in order that the awaking may be

prolonged. The reveille is not like a bugle that sounds, but like a light that travels. It travels by ways that we know not, though we have confusing diagrams of them, and halts or lingers, sometimes where we did not expect; then we get a "specialist," or perhaps a man of genius. The great musician will think in terms of one sense, the painter in terms of another. Even the grosser sense may be the medium of the highest thought. The seer of one age will exhort people to "*Taste* and see that God is good," and the rationalist of another will complain that he can find no sense-language adequate to the expression of pure ideas. But as each nerve centre speaks a language of its own, each can verify what the other has said, and in the multiplicity of them there is, if not wisdom, the means of certain and precise knowledge.

What is even more to the point—in the multiplicity of them there is more than the single power or worth of each. For the larger the number of nerve centres awakened the higher the organisation—the more vigorous and rich the mental life. A little child who feels or smells his orange first, then looks at it, then tries to taste it, is not merely learning something about the orange! He is bringing into exercise several distinct set of nerve fibres, and in doing so is getting the raw material, as it were, for many thoughts about all manner of subjects. Hence the necessity of *object-lessons*, of music, colour, and (first condition of all child gardens) *abundant light*.

But not only does the exercise of the senses contribute to brain growth. The exercise of the muscles has the same effect. Certain dormant nerve centres are awakened when a limb is moved, just as other nerve centres

are stirred when a hard body is touched. And the sensory nerves do not remain passive when the muscular movements are going forward, they immediately send a report of this new departure to the brain, and this association of muscular habits, with given sense impressions, induces further organisation among the nerve elements. This is illustrated very clearly in the case of the artist and the craftsman; and even in the case of the rider, or the boatsman. Their mental power is not only seconded, it is increased and reinforced, through the muscular: their right hand gains through exercise, not strength merely, but *cunning*.

It has been illustrated even more effectually, perhaps, in the case of defective or afflicted children. The education of deaf and even of blind children presents many difficulties to the teachers. Not only has language to be learned without hearing, but an important centre of the brain can never be reached. All the more necessary is it that available centres should be awakened. Acting on this assumption, managers, etc., have built gymnasia in connection with the schools for the deaf and the blind. The results have more than justified expectations. The school for the deaf, in Paris, for instance—where the physical training is varied, including a course of lung drill, or breathing exercises—has produced some "results" which would astonish the ordinary grant-earner. And though England—despite her cricket and football clubs—is sadly behind other nations in providing gymnasia for all her children, she is not without evidence of their utility. In Bradford, for instance, during the past year, a number of defective children have received special instruction.

At first little or no hope was entertained that these children would ever be able to go back and learn with the average scholars, but after a few months of ordinary limb exercises (no gymnasia) combined with Kindergarten exercises, a large number of the so-called "defective" children visibly improved. The superintendent of schools found they could do as much, or almost as much, mental work as the average child. A stampede back to the ordinary school began. Now the question arises, *were* these children defective? And has the teacher worked a miracle, such as was expected of him in earlier days? The answer is that the children, though in no sense "*defective*," were in need of special physical training. The "dulness" which in them was so marked, is observable in a large proportion of all school children. Thus it is proverbial that the elementary school child finds a great difficulty in learning to read. Why? *Because the eye movements need training.* Where this has been neglected in the infants' school, the work of the higher schools is hindered and hampered. The child remains *unobservant*, probably throughout life, his frantic tussle with the alphabet being the first of a sea of kindred troubles. If each of these children had received the special physical training of which he stood in need, it is probable he would never have appeared "dull" at all. Of course where malformation exists (accompanied as it often is by ill-balance among the nerve centres) there is a stern limit set to progress; but even there the defective signs may in most cases be removed by good training.

The afflicted and "defective" children have given the first great object lesson in the uses of the gymnasia—not indeed to the Oxford and Cambridge man, but to John

Smith, of Oldham. John did not believe at all in gymnasia for his son and daughter till quite recently; and he is scratching his hard head over the question yet. "*I* don't see, *I* don't," said a promising working-man member of a School Board, yesterday, "why we should be a-turning the afflicted into acrobats."

Well, there would be no sense in turning them "into acrobats" if the matter ended there. But the matter does not end there. No part of a child's education is more clearly a means to an end than his physical training is. In teaching a boy—afflicted or gifted—to ride, to row, to fence, to *breathe*, to march, there need be no question at all of making him a soldier, a swimmer, a fencer, etc., but there is always the question of securing for him the stimuli and training which will make him happy and efficient in any work he undertakes in laboratory, workshop, factory, mine, or field.

. . . . . . . . . .

But where many stimuli are offered, and many nerve centres awakened and exercised, the question of REST becomes a matter of supreme importance, for all activities involve a breaking up of the nerve cells. This breaking up is safe and necessary only when *it is stopped in time*—in good time; for during childhood the activities are so numerous—what with the growth, adaptation, etc., etc.—that has to be got through, that very little power of resistance can be counted on at all. Cases of death through exhaustion are not rare, even among children who are kindly treated. Then, as a rule, children, especially those who are taught in large classes, do not complain. A few are silent as to

their weariness from sheer lack of intelligence. Some are ashamed to say they are tired, and others are too patient to shrink from bearing fatigue. It is the teacher, therefore, who must be responsible for the condition of his or her pupil. He, presumedly, knows more about the subject of fatigue than they, and as this subject is one of the most important he is called upon to study, he would be acting very injudiciously in leaving it entirely to the discretion, or ndiscretion, of his class.

The feeling of fatigue is caused by the presence of a poisonous substance in the blood. This poison is generated by decomposition of the nerve cells. It is a narcotic—that is to say when we are tired (in the ordinary sense) we have that in us which makes us want to sleep. Of course this is not true at all times, and of every kind of weariness. Where the nervous system is excited the narcotic influence may be overcome for a time, but muscular weariness is nearly always accompanied by the desire for sleep. Grown up persons postpone sleep, as they can postpone so many reactions. Soldiers, travellers, watchers by sick-beds have often resisted the desire to sleep for many nights and days—occasionally for weeks. But these were grown-up people. Who has not seen children travelling late with their parents—parents and children alike weary—but only children sleeping, or inclined to sleep? The fatigued cell in the adult has stores of energy. Little children have no store of energy to fall back on, little power of resisting the toxic effects of fatigue. The rhythm of their life cannot be so completely disturbed without causing the final cessation or death-sleep.

Of these rhythms there are many which they share

with adults. The heart beats in rhythm. Food and rest must be taken at intervals. Night and Day make a great rhythm for us—as do summer and winter, and there exists in each of us a sub-consciousness, a deep below a deep, where there is also law and rhythm, ebb and flow. And the child life has rhythms peculiar to it. Growth is rhythm. Rapid at first, it all but ceases for a time; then comes another period of rapid development when the child emerges almost suddenly into adolescence. Later, growth almost ceases, but a period of activity occurs, where conditions favour it, between the twenty-fifth and fortieth year. It is interesting to note how the same cycle of events is observable in the minds of children who receive tuition. The first few lessons are apparently very effective. The child picks up the new words or facts readily, and makes rapid progress. Then comes a time of apparent depression. Progress is slow, so slow as to be almost imperceptible, then suddenly a new bound forward is made. These intervals of cessation are doubtless a condition of all progress, as sleep is a condition of life. In beats or waves the intelligence advances. *A teacher's time-table ought to be a kind of shadow of a child's day*—with its intervals and ebbs of energy recognised; the flood hours which have to be "taken" clearly indicated, the greatest demand on energy being made in the hours just preceding mid-day, when for obvious reasons the power of response is greatest *in all children*; lighter tasks, broken by play or recreation, marking the ebb of energy of later hours. Thus, much ill-temper and fault-finding might be avoided, and the energy that is wasted in violent effort saved for fruitful labour.

But though the school teacher may secure recreation and variety for the child, and thus avert for a time the on-coming of fatigue, it is the mother who must secure for him the only perfect rest—sleep. Sleep differs from other forms of rest in that it is actively recuperative and restoring. A shrunken nerve cell—shrunken, decomposed by fatigue—has to be built up again, and that is no small affair. The mere ceasing from work will not effect it. Below are two cells, which are in reality one, for the shrunken one is the vigorous cell of an animal after a long day's exercise.

That shrunken cell has all the characteristic of age. In the very old, the volume of the nucleus is not very much more than half what it is in the nerve cell of a healthy child, but the nerve cells of an exhausted child are shrunken as those of the aged are shrunken. Weary people are literally old people, who may become young again through sleep, and it is no sign of vigour but the reverse when a child's sleep is short or light. The slumber of the aged is light, because it is very slightly recuperative. Were the expending period vigorous, the reconstructive processes would be vigorous too; that is to say, the sleep would be long and deep, and nothing is more important than that such sharp division of work from rest should be maintained from the earliest years. It is beginning to be questionable whether much of the personal influence and mental power, which was formerly held to be a result only of superior organisation, is not the effect of a perfect and unfailing rhythm marking the seasons of activity and of rest. The brain-weight of nearly all eminent men is great. But this exceptional development itself may be in some degree the result of the power to enjoy, under all circumstances, recuperative

rest. And this power to command restoring sleep is largely a matter of habit and training. Napoleon wasted none of his leisure, nor did Wellington; we are told—for our amusement—how they went to sleep when there was no business in hand. Those amusing tales are not merely amusing. They are also suggestive. Suggestive too is the evidence supplied by the languid and serene persons who spend their waking hours in genteel indolence, and swallow sleeping draughts at night to combat insomnia. In such lives there is no beat, no tide. These are like the marshes, breeding miasma, the strength of them never "gathered together."

As for the children, they will lead us aright—in this as in other matters. It is only a question of our following them. Children become more and more "nervous" in proportion as we educate them. (Not nervous in the sense that the word is often used, signifying weak or excitable. Education does not weaken, and it excites only as the sunshine "excites" the plant to grow, or the dew "excites" it to blossom. With the rousing of many nerve centres, the flow of blood through the tissues becomes larger and steadier, so that every organ is strengthened.) And the healthfully "nervous" child needs much sleep, while children of sluggish temperament can do with very little. The teaching given to-day in the Board Schools is already reducing the number of children who can be described as "lymphatic." But we have a large number of children who are delicate, bright, and irritable. These, we are often told, suffer from "over-pressure." "Over-pressure there is often none. The children are sometimes even in advance of their class-mates, and loiter in their standards

till the duller children come up. They suffer *through lack of sufficient sleep;* and their symptoms are just as unmistakable as the symptoms of half-famished children.

To prevent weariness, however, we must not only see that a child sleeps, we must see that his energy is not wasted while he is awake. The waste of energy that takes place in a child when he experiences fear, grief, or anger, we have no means of calculating, but we know that it is not only great but irreparable. Once upon a time, not very long ago, it was generally held that corporal punishment, or, as it was then called, "correction," was a good and necessary thing, that a teacher who "spared the rod," spoiled the child! No hint was given of the spoliation and waste that accompanied the use of the rod. That part of the question was conveniently ignored, and the axiom accepted as a particularly happy and comfortable one for teachers and parents in a hurry. It is a pity that some of the more speculative teachers did not follow the idea of "rod-using" to its logical conclusion, but they thought as little of doing this as judges of criminals think of the sin of taking away life when they condemn a murderer to death. Of course, judges who punish crime, may be excused for getting into difficulties. Minos himself constructed a labyrinth round his monster! And for centuries we have had to make the best excuse we could for the the ordinary judge who punishes murderers by death and the violent lad by violence; catching himself as it were in the meshes of guilt by running after those who are entangled already. But the educationists path is not a coil at all, but a straight track. The aim of education is the unfolding of the faculties and the development of the

vital forces. That is very clear, and it is very clear also that all corporal punishment, besides being a physical outrage offered to a helpless being, is a deliberate depression of vital energy. That is to say, in using the rod a teacher is doing what he knows to be wrong, and to say that he has a good end in view, is merely to state that he is doing evil that good may come, a course of action which no one is bold enough to recommend openly in these days. Of course he may not be able to control and educate his pupil. In that case, he has failed, and, if ambitious to master his own trade, he must now find out why he has failed, for there is no short cut to success even in the teaching profession. In proportion to the range of a teacher's own consciousness and ability will be the effectiveness and variety of his means of educating. Thus the whole question resolves itself into one of adult life, not of child-life, and, as such we may here dismiss it.

In reviewing what has been said of exercise and rest—the two sides of the education problem—by every authority on both subjects, we are forced to the conclusion that while, even in earliest life no peculiar gift or aptitude in a child should be ignored, the school or class-room is not the place for specialisation. The very phrases, "technical education," "*class* education," are an absurdity, since they imply the perfecting of one or more organs, senses, or tastes at the expense of others. The measure of a child's mental power does not depend upon his having learned one thing, but upon his having experienced many. An artist could not be an artist if he could do nothing but paint, for his power to paint is one of a series of powers!—even as his power to *feel* is a series of sensations. In the number and balance of many

powers and feelings there arises a kind of blossoming of all in a gift that is specialised, of course, but is still very literally *the flower of them all.* Thus the great artist is a great teacher; and Giotto could draw Charity or Injustice not merely because he had mastered the art of drawing, but because he was Giotto. And what is very strikingly true of the great artist (not the mere clever draughtsman!) is true of other workers. Scientists are fond of saying, "*We* discover laws; you can apply them." But experience does not justify us in rejoicing much over this division of labour. Galileo and Leibnitz were willing to apply as well as to investigate. Stephenson applied, and so did Rennie, and the notable stonemason, Hugh Miller! and even John Kepler, was a very nondescript kind of person, who had never been to a Technical School. It is customary to point to the more striking triumphs of modern invention and discovery as evidence of the superiority of our generation to those which preceded it. But are we sure that all our "modern discoveries" are discoveries at all. There is some reason for thinking that many of them may be traced back to the thinking craftsman of an earlier century. Who believes now that Darwin's Theory of the Variability of the Species is a new one? Does anyone think that the men of the 18th century had no hints of the dynamical Theory of Heat? Have we not ample evidence that the thinkers of the 17th century presaged the solution of most of the great problems of Mechanics and Physiology? These early half-articulate hints are not effective, and yet given the *first* hint of a solution, the rest is very apt to "follow as the night the day." Then the sun is overpowering when it comes, so that even the most obscure people are

dazzled into believing, like Mrs. Poyser's cock, that it has risen to hear them crow. Yet perhaps we may learn something, besides the first word of many solutions, from those quiet craftsmen long dead. In *them* the brain was not sacrificed for an isolated group of reactions, nor the mind bartered for an aptitude.

But if we educate all alike, some will cry, "there will be no working class—no thinking class—no class distinction at all, in fact." The people who thus speak are not for the most part old-world Tories, but new-world Liberals; they are people in whose ears ring one refrain: "La carrière ouverte aux talents." A very good refrain it is; but one loses the very meaning of it, a little perhaps when it is pitched for ever on the same key, and rung for ever on the same note. For what *is* a career, if it be not the making for a goal; and what goal can the educationist have but the full and harmonious development of *all* the powers of any pupil. If he has any other end than this, then he should call himself a specialist—for an educationist he is not; but if he take this as his goal and presses towards it, there is no reason for him to feel discouraged, for, though he may not be helping to perpetuate a race of manual labourers and mere theorists, he will be helping to equip a community of efficient and thoughtful craftsmen, which may do just as well, or much better. Certainly, in such a community, there would be distinctions much more numerous and infinitely more true than those which exist to-day; for, when all is said and done, we cannot by taking thought add a cubic to the stature of anyone. The most that can be done by the educationist is to find out as accurately as he may what his pupil's real

stature *is*. He can not bestow a single new nerve cell, much less make an ordinary child into a Giotto! He can, through cultivation, do wonders with a child already possessed of much inherent latent power.

Since the teacher's power is therefore so limited, while his opportunities are so great, we may confidently expect that for a long period *rational and liberal education while benefiting all children would increase rather than diminish the differences between them.* The well-endowed child would come into a and larger share of his natural heritage. The poorly endowed would receive "that which falleth to him." The gulf between them might yawn wide (and wider), but the first would not be a crippled thinker—nor the second a despised drudge. And the time would come, sooner or later, when culture would have its effect on *nurture*. Then, indeed, the children of the less favoured members of our race, who have been faithful over a few things, might be made co-rulers over many.

But there is a still more hopeful fact to remember, viz., that masses of substance exist in every human brain which, as yet, yield no re-action. May these not one day respond to stimuli, and contribute to that play of energy in which every new factor comes, not as a mere addition but as a new interpreter, affecting not mass alone but organisation? These may be evoked only through the strengthening of the formed cells, the establishment of right habits, the observance of the laws that govern our activities and our rest.

Meantime, the progressive School Board member would do well to concern himself mainly with educational matters. Politics will not help him much. Party feuds—

the religious questions—have long won John Smith's attention and distracted him. Even if he chances to find a tract on Education by a Progressive, it turns out probably to be a mere tabulation of articles needed—precisely like a teachers' school-material list! Baths, gymnasia, dining-halls, etc.! That is all very well, but suppose Thomas Jones sends in reactionary members! Members who do uot see why more baths, or teachers, or drill needed. Then what is John to do? One thing he can do. He can select one subject on the time-table, say reading (that being the first R), and insist that it be taught properly.

Now there are various ways of teaching reading. Our Board and Voluntary teachers have imparted the art for twenty-six years—with some unforeseen results. To begin with, many of them have hopelessly injured their own vocal instruments (the vocal mechanism is of all instruments the most complicated; but the teachers have played on it six hours per day during years, and have developed certain larynxal disorders quite peculiar to their class—notably the disease known to the faculty as "school laryngitis.") Then they have allowed, and indeed innocently encouraged the children to strain their vocal chords, and imitate their own bad vocal habits, all this being almost inevitable in view of the large classes, the hurry and exigencies of the moment. In no sense are the teachers to blame. *All* the blame rests with those who desired to have reading taught, anyhow!

A teacher in one school bethought him the other day that he would have reading taught thoroughly. And as all his pupils were in the habit (general to-day among children) of straining the larynx in schoolroom and playing

ground, he secured, as a preliminary step, the services of a teacher of voice production. This teacher began, of course, by giving the children lessons in breathing, but on the very first day it was discovered that the air of the schoolrooms was not pure enough. Up went the windows; but the air was still vitiated, and the need for a new system of ventilation pressed on the attention of all. The lessons proceeded, but were interrupted afresh. Every pupil had to be dealt with individually. Faulty or hurried articulation, bad vocal habits, demand *personal* attention. The question of the staffing of schools was at once pressed to the front.

. . . . . . . . . . . .

Now there are many subjects John may consider as mere "fads"; but, surely, the first R is not one of these! He may be said to have chosen this subject himself (in defiance of tradition and authority), having little in view at the time but the alphabet. And the first R has been taught to the millions; but at what a cost of youthful life and strength. Could a more liberal *mis*-education be devised than the listening to an untrained, outraged human organ! Manifestly there are more ways than one of teaching a child to read. *But* there is only *one* right way, and John could not choose it without bringing himself into line with the greatest

*In Bradford, where experiments in breathing drill have been made in two Board schools, the measurements (taken by Dr. Kerr, the Howard Medallist for this year) show that of eighty boys, of average physique, forty who took the breathing lessons grew one-tenth more in stature within six months than did the remaining forty who had no lung drill. Yet the boys taking the breathing lessons were older than the others, and would, under ordinary circumstances, have grown less rapidly than their younger companions. The exercises are now being given in four large schools.

authorities in education. "There is no small reform possible in education," says an illustrious teacher. And he is right. A *small* educational reform is impossible. Any true reform, even in the teaching of the first R, and the training of the persons who are to teach it would involve a series of reforms—reform in the ventilation, reform in the staffing of schools and training colleges ; it would bring with it consequences, in the health, the stature, the self-control of the pupils ; it would affect their speech, their song, their whole moral and physical culture. . . . Reflect only for a moment on the power of thousands of men and women who had learned to use all the resources of the human voice : the refined, cultivated speaking voice, persuasive, penetrating, full of subtle intonations. To listen daily to such a voice would be worth a thousand lessons on the Staff Notation. Yet the training of adult speaking voices would be but one in a series of reforms following the first serious attempt to improve the teaching of the first R. In conclusion let us say that as no *small* reform is possible in education, no small ends (such as our "commercial supremacy, etc.") can be entertained by the true educationist. These may be left to the politician. The educationist rests assured that strength and staying power, minor ends, remains in the long run with the people who have prolonged the period of what may be called *human* education for their children. This human education, including first, all that is necessary for bodily health : pure air, space, water, and soap. No speeches about moral purity, till the child knows what it is by daily ablutions to be cleansed! No sermons about the moral law till natural law is understood and obeyed and revered. It is only after a rapid de-

velopment of the senses that the mind wakens and begins to rule. It is only after right habits have been formed that right ideals can be conceived. Thus, proceeding from the lower to the higher, or rather from the simpler to the more complex, we can have some confidence that we are not creating confusion, and inducing a coarseness of mind which allows the pupils to break every natural law while addressing the divinity, and to pray in places which are full of (deserved) plagues.

As for the Moral atmosphere, the Teacher literally creates it—that is to say, he creates an atmosphere in which dormant cells waken, and active cells grow; and just in proportion as he grows in power and influence, his school will be visibly his garden, not his reformatory. (Do we not know now that reform is impossible, that what is written in the fibre of the human tree is written, and can never be successfully erased.) But his garden—a place where his own mind will expand and grow in sympathy with the younger life around. A place of extremes, however—where a man must be autocrat and despot, if he is not a husbandman. "Les grands êtres," said Balzac, "*s'étendent par l'égalité*. Les êtres étroits s'étendent aussi bien par la persécution que par la bienfaisance." The choice therefore lies always between the nerve-play of despotism (extraordinary opportunities, for which are offered in every school), and the quick expansion of a mind that is for ever lifting others into its communion. The unfailing sign of commanding superiority being the power in the master to dispense with the external signs of authority, the power *de s'étendre par l'égalité*. The vulgarities of present-day discipline, its coarse intrusions, and dangerous short cuts to

trivial successes are out of place in the human garden. They hinder and shroud the great events of growth. They banish the joy of spring-tide, *some* expression of which is registered even in the desert that blossoms, and on the blanching summer sea from the Human Garden. They must disappear before the Board School or Voluntary School teacher can produce lasting results. They must be perhaps almost forgotten before he can confidently say in any school-room.

Lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
*The flowers appear on the earth,*
The time of the singing of birds is come.

# Natural Inequality

By Grant Allen.

---

All men are by nature born free and unequal. Socialism is an endeavour to preserve and make the best of this natural inequality.

I begin with these obvious though neglected truths, because it is common to hear people who know nothing about the aims or methods of Socialism assert that "Socialists want to drag us all down to one dull dead level." No more grotesque misrepresentation of the Socialist ideal could possibly be made; yet it has been made so often that most unenquiring minds have come to look upon it as an acknowledged fact. You have only to tell a lie often enough and loud enough for the world to accept it as a familiar truth.

In reality, the actual aim of Socialism in this respect cannot be better summed up than in a beautiful phrase of Ruskin's: "No equality, but a frank recognition of every betterness we can find."

Our existing social system—often ridiculously described as individualist (which is just what it is not)—goes upon the exact opposite tack. It endeavours to set up an artificial inequality among those who are really and naturally equal; to introduce an artificial equality among those who are really and naturally unequal; to oppose the recognition of every real betterness; to elevate the lower at the expense

of the higher. Socialism, we may be sure, will undo all that. It will aim at keeping mediocre intelligences and mediocre moral natures in mediocre places; it will strive to prevent little men from masquerading as big ones: but, on the other hand, it will give exceptional abilities and exceptional moral character fair chances of developing themselves freely; it will allow big men to show their natural bigness, unshadowed by the artificial inflation of little ones.

A historical parallel may help my meaning. If you look at an Egyptian bas-relief, you will often see a representation of a number of small men on a field of battle, all scurrying and running away from a monstrous chariot, drawn by two horses, and containing a comparatively gigantic man, about five times as big as the pygmies he is engaged in chasing. The gigantic man is the Great King; the little creatures before him are his enemies; while other equally little men who accompany and assist him are his faithful subjects. Now, were the kings of Egypt really bigger by several sizes than other Egyptians? Certainly not; that is just the artist's naif way of impressing upon you the greatness of the Great King, making you feel the profound distinction supposed to exist between him and mere ordinary humanity. It is a purely artificial and conventional greatness, covering an actual equality or inferiority in stature. Great kings are physically no bigger than other men; Louis Quatorze, the Grand Monarque, was even exceptionally small, and so was a man of greater mental power, though morally no doubt as inferior, Napoleon.

I often think these Egyptian bas-reliefs make an excellent illustration of the so-called individualist *régime* about us.

We, too, live in a world which strenuously pretends that some men of five-feet-six are ten feet high and often that men of six feet are five-feet-six. One can imagine a bold innovator, disgusted with this absurdity, trying to introduce portraits into Egyptian art. "What!" cry the scandalised courtiers, "would you reduce all mankind to one dull dead level? Would you ruin the variety and diversity of art? Would you paint or carve the Great King himself as no bigger than any ordinary priest or scribe or servant?" "No," the artist answers, "I would not reduce humanity to one dead level. It is *you* who do that; for you paint all men, except the Great King, of exactly the same size: though some are tall and some are short, some are fat and some are thin, yet for you they are all represented alike by a single canon. What *I* propose to do is the exact opposite of that: I would paint everybody of his own real size, and with an accurate representation of his own real features. The Great King is four inches shorter, I observe, than his chief minister; and I would represent him accordingly. The chief butler is fat; the chief baker thin; and I would paint them as I find them. Rameses is taller and fairer than Sethi, and taller and fairer he shall be in my picture. No equality, but a frank recognition of every difference we can find." And I know that when our artist had spoken thus, a chorus of horror would go up from the scandalised courtiers to the ears of the Great King, "This man is a leveller; he wants to reduce us all to one dull dead level."

Our existing system, in like manner, takes little men and elevates them to positions of artificial superiority, not on account of any merit of their own, but simply and solely

because they are the sons of their fathers, or because they have inherited wealth created by others, or because they have tabooed to themselves the land and mines that are common property, or because, taking advantage of bad social arrangements, they have juggled into their own hands railways, or stocks and shares, or gas, or electricity, or the water supply of great cities. On the other hand, which is even worse, it takes great men—men born naturally great and unequal—men with exceptional abilities for serving the public—great thinkers, great men of science, great artists, great inventors, great captains of industry, great creators of beautiful works in prose or verse, in form or colour—whom it artificially dwarfs and restricts—throws obstacles in their way—prevents them from realising their own full powers—prevents the community from getting the good it might otherwise get out of their exceptional abilities. The false inequality of artifice thus militates against the recognition and public utilisation of the true inequality of nature, and so deprives us of the advantage we might gain by a proper recognition of every real betterness.

I consider this second disadvantage still graver in the long run for the progress of humanity than even the more obvious injustice of letting little men carry off an unfairly large share of the earth's produce. Of course, that in itself is a gross injustice; but it is an injustice which everybody with a rudimentary moral sense can at once appreciate. Any man with any natural power of ethical reasoning must see at a glance that it is wrong for one person, no better nor wiser nor abler than the rest, to be entrusted with square miles of land to do as he will with, while other men, just as good or bad, just as clever or silly, are compelled to

go without one paltry acre of our mother soil. Any man, with this modicum of ethical sense, can see that it is wrong for one person to usurp the produce of many men's labour, not because he has any just right or claim to it, but simply because bad social arrangements have made it possible for him to filch it from them, leaving the actual producers a bare subsistence, or even, in extreme cases (as in old age or famine) handing them over to actual starvation. It is obvious on the face of it that what no man made or helped to make, is common property of the human race; while what any man made or helped to make, is in so far and proportionately the property of the makers. And since land was made by none, it is clear that land can belong to none; while, since most other products are made by the common labour of us all, from material derived from the common stock of land, it is clear that most other products are the common property of all of us together.

These, I say, are elementary ethical truths, which anybody can grasp at once, unless he be either hopelessly stupid or hopelessly blinded by prejudice. And in the latter case, I would add parenthetically, he probably does grasp them, though he pretends otherwise for his own advantage. But the converse aspect of the question is not so clear to everybody; and I shall therefore proceed to show how much harm is done by our present artificial dead-level system, in refusing to recognise real betternesses, and in putting in their place man-made inequalities.

In a well-organised world, it is obvious that the community would wish to make the best use for itself of every natural diversity and inequality. Some men

are taller than others; it would strive to utilise the tallest men (other things equal) on work where their exceptional stature would enable them to do things which smaller men could only do with greater difficulty. Some men are stronger than others; it would strive to utilise the strongest men (with the same proviso) on work where exceptional strength would produce exceptional results for the common benefit. Some men have great and conspicuous organising abilities; these it would obviously utilise as organisers. Some men have inventive faculty; to these it would give every possible facility for the exercise or development of their inventive powers. Some men can create beautiful objects of art, beautiful works of literature; these it would employ as painters and sculptors, as poets and romance-writers. Some men have a natural taste for investigating and illustrating the laws of nature, which may ultimately subserve human needs and human industries; these it would specialise on the abstract work of discovery, or the concrete and constructive work of invention, in accordance with the natural bent of their faculty. It would frankly recognise every real betterness, so as to give such betterness a fair chance of doing its best work, physical or mental, for the benefit of humanity.

In place of this ideal, what does the existing system do for us? Does it frankly recognise every real betterness? Not a bit of it. It sets up mediocrities in artificial high places, and allows them to swamp and drown and crush out and eclipse all forms of real excellence. Let us begin at the artificial top—or near it. Look at our English peerage. What is that institution but the setting up of a group of

mediocrities in the place which ought to be occupied by moral worth, high character, exceptional intelligence, rare legislative faculty? The peers, for example, have each a substantive vote, which they can exercise as a veto against the popular will, in about the proportion of one peer to seventy thousand other citizens. Does anybody really believe that a peer is seventy thousand times as wise, as learned, as able, as moral, as most other people—any more than he believes that Rameses and Amenhotep were four times as tall as ordinary Egyptians? Does anybody really believe that one Duke outweighs in worth a town of 70,000 inhabitants? Does anybody really believe that, in spite of the strenuous prayers of the Church, as weekly offered, the lords are really endowed with supernatural "grace, wisdom, and understanding?" Is it not matter of common notoriety that as a mass they are dull and commonplace men, of low moral status, and of vulgar ideals? They are given their great position by the mere accident of birth, or by the chance accession of wealth; they represent either the descendants of former successful land-grabbers, or else the modern bankers, brewers, and stock-exchange speculators. Nobody alleges for them any real betterness. They are there in virtue of money, and money only.

Now, the system of which this is a sample is the same throughout; and it re-acts in a thousand evil ways upon the national standards and the national conscience. These peers, put by a false method in a false position, do infinite indirect harm to the morals, the intellect, and the advance of the community. I am not thinking here of those piquant "aristocratic scandals" in the matters of sex-relation which certain newspapers serve up to their readers with spicy con-

diments. Those, it seems to me, are relatively unimportant. It is true, the aristocratic class are as a rule selfish and barbaric in their treatment of women, and particularly of women whom they consider (by another artificial inequality) "beneath them." But that is a small matter, and, perhaps on the whole, by keeping alive the discussion of sex-questions, the laxity of the "upper classes" has its counter-balancing advantages. I am rather thinking here of far deeper and more all-pervading moral results of the false standard of nobility. The existence of a peerage, and the servile worship of its rank, its wealth, its titles, its appanages, give rise to our national vice of snobbishness, which means the admiration of worthless things in the place of worthy ones. To have a fine house, to drive a carriage and pair, to paint armorial bearings on all his belongings, to see his men-servants dressed in livery, if possible, to attain at last to a knighthood, perhaps even a baronetcy, or, oh, wild dream, a peerage itself! these are the ideals which the base-minded man of our existing world sets most before himself. He does not aim at the worthy things of life: at knowledge, at culture, at artistic sensibility, at moral endeavour, at the prize of high citizenship; he grasps instead at these vulgar ends, and most of his fellow-citizens admire instead of despise him for so grasping. Our artificial inequality thus acts as a national snare, by setting up false ideals, which vulgar minds too readily follow, and which are antagonistic to the higher ideals of distributive justice and honest citizenship. Such men are striving, not to obtain the reasonable reward of their own exertions, but to monopolise for purposes of vulgar ostentation the products of the labour of hundreds of others, their equals or superiors,

whom they have reduced to an artificial inferiority beneath them.

The inequalities thus multiplied shut the door on every side to the recognition and utilisation of real betternesses. The nobodies usurp, in the public eye, the place which should of right belong to the somebodies. Men who have it in them efficiently and ably to serve the public, are prevented or retarded by the interposition of the artificial superiorities. It is only by long and close watching of life that one realises the magnitude of this national misfortune. I could multiply endless instances. I content myself with a few. Look at the lives of our truly great men—our thinkers, our organisers, our men of science, our discoverers, our inventors, our poets, our men of letters, our artists. Is it not a commonplace that the majority of these have had to pass through a period of early struggle which killed some of them, crippled others, soured not a few, drove mad or disheartened or permanently weakened many? Is it not a well-known fact that numbers of them died poor or starving, or gave up the struggle in disgust, or lived on, mere wrecks, or took refuge in suicide? Can this be called "frank recognition of every betterness?" And was not frank recognition delayed or refused largely because the public was already taken up with admiring and chronicling the doings of titled or wealthy nobodies? Does not our society occupy itself mainly with the men of wealth, of rank, of position, taking little heed to seek out the struggling inventor, artist, poet, naturalist, philosopher, discoverer, who is worth to humanity ten thousand times as much as these ostensible figure-heads? And would not all that be got rid of if only we could clear the ground for

the recognition of real betternesses by abolishing the distinctions we now confer upon mediocrities and inferiorities?

Look at it from another point of view. We have great schools and universities. Do the ablest and most educable boys and men of all classes get educated at these? By no means. Far from it. The most important schools—Eton, Harrow, Winchester; the great universities—Oxford and Cambridge—are almost wholly given over to the great families, aristocratic or capitalist; to the sons of peers or landed gentlemen, of bankers, brewers, merchants, manufacturers, to the exclusion of lads of ability and merit from other strata of the population. When these young men have passed through their school or college course, they go to the professions or to general callings. And how do they fare there? Once more the same thing. Are ability and character the sole credentials of success and public usefulness? Not at all. Mediocrities are shoved into posts for which they are unfit, to do badly what others would do well for the good of the community, on no better ground than because they are the sons, brothers, cousins, or friends of some peer, some landowner, or some wealthy manufacturer. Look at our army and navy for example, useless destructive organisations, to be sure, which no Socialist or Internationalist can regard with anything but disfavour; still, there they are, and they will point my moral at least as well as any other organisation in our ill-ordered commonwealth. Are they mainly officered and ruled by the ablest and most energetic and bravest men, freely selected on a general survey by pure merit from all classes? Not a bit of it. You have only to look through the army-list or the navy-list to see that an immense number of the highest posts are

bestowed upon mediocrities who chance to be peers, or the sons, brothers, and cousins of peers; baronets and country gentlemen, or the sons, brothers, and cousins of country gentlemen; and others of that kidney. You will also recognise at every turn the names of well-known brands of beer, stout, whiskey, and gin; of Manchester cotton-lords and City of London bankers; of those whom it was the snobbish fashion of thirty years ago complacently to describe as "merchant princes." These for the most part usurp promotion, to the exclusion of superior ability and character. The false inequality allows the real no fair chance of asserting itself for the public benefit.

It is the same at the bar, in politics, and in the Government service. Look at the number of judges bearing well-known aristocratic or capitalist names. Look at the number of members of Parliament who are courtesy lords, or elder or younger sons of peers; who are baronets, country gentlemen, or great bankers or brewers, compared with those few who, like Burns and Mabon and Broadhurst in one direction, like Morley, Asquith, and Lecky in another, owe their position simply and solely to tried abilities. Dozens of mediocrities are there, wholly unfit for the post of legislator, but thrust into the House for no other reason than because the false betternesses of money and rank obscure the real and native betternesses of brains and energy and moral character. It is the same with the civil service. We do not choose men to serve the State simply and solely because they are the best men for the place: we send them as ambassadors to Paris, or employ them as Junior Lords of the Admiralty or as Commissioners in Lunacy, because they are peers or relations of peers,

capitalists, or relations or toadies of capitalists. Everywhere we allow artificial inequality to reduce real inequality to a dead level of uselessness.

Nor is this all. The constant setting forth of an artificial standard blinds men's eyes to the existence of a real standard. In ten thousand ways, the peer, or the man of wealth, usurps the credit, the honour, the position, which ought to belong to the man of ability, the man of energy, the man of moral worth, the man of high artistic sensibility. I could give a thousand examples, I will limit myself to two. Even in the Royal Society and other scientific institutions, such considerations are unfortunately allowed to obtrude themselves. There is a certain mediocrity, unimpressive but solemn, a third-class sciolist, who happens to be a duke, and imagines himself to be a man of science. Were he a commoner, sprung from the people, neither his speeches in Parliament nor his crude and jejune attempts at scientific thought would receive anything more than the compassionate smile they merit. But he is a duke. As a consequence, not only are his prosings in the House of Lords—the prosings of a "superior" doctrinaire third-rate mind—reported in full, but he has even been invited to sit in the presidential chair of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. My other instance is like unto it. There is a certain body called the Society of Authors, which, one might imagine, would rise superior to similar silliness. But this society holds a yearly dinner, an odd thing for such a society to do, but still eminently English, and they put as a rule in the chair — whom ? Meredith, Herbert Spencer, Thomas Hardy, William Watson ? No, none of these, but a lord,

caught at random, who happens to have published a booklet or who has deigned to express an interest in literature! And this among men of letters! If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

I have written all this, honestly and frankly, in spite of the knowledge that a certain class of petty critics will say of it at once, "Narrow spitefulness!" Nothing could be less true. Narrow men, born in a community like ours, do not try to expose its weak points; they try to use them merely for their own advantage. Instead of decrying evils, they make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. It does not "pay" in England to be an ardent reformer. It "pays" to conform, to blink, to shut your eyes, to hold your tongue, to make up to the prejudices and preconceptions of the artificially great; to watch closely which way the cat jumps, and which side of one's own bread is buttered. To tilt at windmills, on the contrary, gains you no pence and little honour, save amongst those whose honour counts nought for worldly success and worldly advantage. My one object here has been to look the question fairly and dispassionately in the face, and to ask, "Is this the way in which a nation can get most good for itself out of the natural inequalities which prevail among its members?"

In a well-organised world, on the other hand, I conceive that the greatest honour and the highest posts would be uniformly reserved for the best and the most competent. At present, it is luck to a large extent that regulates reward. Men who do little or nothing for the public good are nevertheless born Dukes and Marquises, with a vast estate, and a vast place in the consideration of their countrymen. Men who

have been more successful than others in brewing beer, or in distilling whiskey; men who have turned out a better lucifer match, or a cheaper soap, or a worse kind of shoddy; men who have successfully adulterated their coffee, or floured their cocoa, who have mixed cotton with wool or oversized calico, who have gambled to the ruin of others on the stock-exchange, who have juggled into their hands mines, or railway shares, or water-works, or telegraph companies—purveyors of falsified goods or robbers of widows and orphans—often secure wealth, honour, and position; in some cases become founders of "noble" families. Moreover, it is a toss-up what result even useful energies will produce for their possessor. The man who invents a new stopper for soda-water bottles, a new tyre for bicycle wheels—excellent things in their way—often makes a fortune. So, oftener still does the man who buys the patent from the inventor for next to nothing. But the thinker who discovers some great truth of nature; the worker who invents some valuable surgical appliance, some new anaesthetic, some scientific instrument, some optical improvement, usually makes next to nothing, and sometimes even loses his all in the attempt to perfect and bring out his discovery. In other words, reward is not proportioned to the true worth of the invention or discovery to mankind at large, but merely to its immediate marketable value. We may be sure that Socialism would reverse all that. While encouraging to a due extent the invention of safety matches and improved soda-water-bottle corks, it would encourage, at least to an equal extent, new astronomical, physical, biological, and sociological discoveries—new inventions in all the higher walks of life—new poems, new pictures, new ideas, new philosophies.

For we must remember that in their own nature, discoveries of deep-seated laws, such as the law of universal gravitation, the correlation and conservation of energy, the principle of organic evolution, and so forth, are far more important to mankind, even practically, than secondary and so-called practical discoveries or inventions. They give us an insight into the working of nature which results in the end in a fuller mastery of nature—in numberless inventions and applications of the first importance. It took generations of electrical investigators to lead up to the first practical electrical appliances. And generally speaking it may be said that while one department of science, including physics, mechanics, chemistry, and the like, is often overpaid, from its immediate marketable value, another division of science, including astronomy, biology, sociology, and so forth, is generally underpaid, because it has little immediate marketable value.

"But this," some good, though narrow Socialists will say, "is all pure individualism!" So be it, if you will; but it is also the best Socialism. I have never been one of those who hold that Socialism is opposed to individualism. On the contrary, I believe Socialism will encourage and develop individuality. I am a Socialist just *because* I am an individualist. Who are even now the best Socialists among us? The least individual? Not a bit of it; the most markedly individualistic and idiosyncratic temperaments in Britain. "The character of the units," says Herbert Spencer, "determines the character of the aggregate." As individual Socialists *are* themselves, so will they build up the Socialist Republic. I hold that one of the great points of Socialism will be this, that while it will seek

to redress such natural inequalities as feebleness, ill-health, loss of limb or organ, deficient intellect, or deficient moral sense, it will seek to develop to the utmost all better inequalities, such as conspicuous strength, health, manual dexterity, mental ability, virile or feminine faculty, paternity and maternity, artistic, scientific, or literary ability, and so forth, and to utilise them to the utmost for the good of the community. In short, while discouraging all false betternesses, it will encourage and make the most of all true ones.

"But this," you object once more, "is to set up one aristocracy in place of another." Again, so be it! I told you we were no levellers. We want to see real strength, real nobility, real goodness, real character recognised and made much of. We want to see mediocrity treated as mediocrity, given every chance to do its best, but not to oust and swamp real talent or real strength, not to do ill for us what others can do well for us. Even if your misconception were right—if we wanted to put Herbert Spencer in the national palace of Blenheim, and to install Hardy or Burne Jones at Chatsworth or Knowsley, I do not think that would be nearly as bad a thing as putting mere dukes and earls and cotton-spinners and mine-owners there. But your misconception is *not* right. Under a socialistic *régime*, I do not think any citizen would desire to surround himself with selfish, foolish, and anti-social pomp; I am quite sure that no other citizen would aid and abet him in so doing. For pomp like this can only be maintained by one man arrogating to himself the result of many men's labour; which is the very evil socialism is designed to cure. No, we will have no dukes, either of birth or of intellect; we

will have leaders of men who are leaders of men in virtue of their natural born inequality.

Such leaders of men, such thinkers and organisers, together with those who possessed the art and skill to make life lovelier and better worth living, by pictorial or plastic art, by mimetic representation, by literature and poetry, by music, by personal beauty, would no doubt receive something the same sort of universal veneration which was paid in France to Victor Hugo. They will be loved, like good Walt Whitman; honoured like Cimabue; respected like Darwin. Attention will not be diverted from them, as in modern England, on peers and manufacturers; as in modern America, on silver-kings and railroad wreckers. They may even not improbably receive special marks of public favour, officially bestowed upon them.

Even nowadays we make successful generals peers and give them pensions; nay, we sometimes dole out a bare subsistence on the civil list to makers of beautiful poetry, or discoverers of great scientific truths. It is not improbable that the Socialist Republic of the future, while disendowing the generals, will honour to some modest and sufficient extent those who produce the products it most values. It certainly will not wish that its poets, its painters, its philosophers, its inventors, shall lack for bread, or find their work disturbed by sordid and squalid difficulties. These difficulties, indeed, will have vanished for all; much more then will they have vanished for the best and greatest.

"Then, after all, you want a dead level!" Oh, if you can see and value *no* differences in human life save those which consist in great houses, livery servants, horses and carriages, and external splendour, you merely convict your-

self of gross and crass materialism. We are not careful to answer you in this matter. There are other things than those, in which we wish for no dead level, but for constant advance to nobler and ever nobler diversities. The cult of the millionaire is not the one way to avoid a dull and inartistic uniformity.

"But this is not what we expect from a Socialist advocate. We expect passionate sympathy with the wrongs of hunger, passionate love for the poor and suffering." Exactly so; and you will get them in the proper place. I am not writing here on that side of the question. If I wished, I could treat it from that side too, and say some things to startle you. But my object here is merely to answer this one foolish objection, that Socialism reduces all men to one dead level. I say on the contrary, in everything in which superiority is worth counting, Socialism will encourage, foster, and increase, every possible inequality.

---

# The Illusions of Socialism.

By Bernard Shaw.

---

Do not suppose that I am going to write about the illusions of Socialism with the notion of saving anyone from them. Take from the activity of mankind that part of it which consists in the pursuit of illusions, and you take out the world's mainspring. Do not suppose, either, that the pursuit of illusions is the vain pursuit of nothing: on the contrary, there can no more be an illusion without a reality than a shadow without an object. Only, men are for the most part so constituted that realities repel, and illusions attract them. To take the simple instance much insisted on by Schopenhauer, young men and young women do not attract each other as they really are. The young man will not marry the young woman until he is persuaded that she is an angel, with whom life will be ecstasy; nor will she marry him until she believes him to be a hero. Under the spell of this illusion, they marry in haste; but it does not at all follow that they repent at leisure. If that were so, their married friends would warn them against marriage instead of encouraging them in it; and widows and widowers would not marry again, as they generally do when they can. The pair find one another out, it is true; but if the union is at all a fortunate one, the disillusion

consists in the encouraging discovery that one real woman, faults and all, is worth a dozen angels, and, similarly, one real man, follies and all, worth all the heroes ever imagined. Consequently, these two dupes of a ridiculous illusion, instead of finding themselves cheated and disappointed, get more than they bargained for, and breed new generations for the world as well; and that is why they allow their own sons and daughters to pursue the same illusion when their turn comes.

Now, therefore, if I say flatly that Socialism as it appears to ninety-nine out of every hundred of the ardent young Socialists who will read this book, is an illusion, I do not say that there is no reality behind the illusion, nor that the reality will not be much better than the illusion. Only, I do say, very emphatically, that if the Socialist future were presented in its reality to those who are devoting all the energy they have to spare after their day's work, and all the enthusiasm of which they are capable, to "the Cause," many of them would not lift a finger for it, and would even disparage and loathe it as a miserably prosaic "bourgeois" development and extension of the middle class respectability of to-day. When any part of Socialism presents itself in the raw reality of a concrete proposal, capable of being adopted by a real Government, and carried out by a real Executive, the professed Socialists are the last people in the country who can be depended on to support it. At best, they will disparage it as "a palliative," and assure the public that it will do no good unless the capitalist system is entirely abolished as well. At worst, they will violently denounce it, and brand its advocates as frauds, traitors, and so on. This natural antagonism between the enthusiasts who

conceive Socialism and the statesmen who have to reduce it to legislative and administrative measures, is inevitable, and must be put up with. But it need not be put up with silently. Every man, enthusiast or realist, has more or less power of self-criticism; and the more he is reasoned with, the more reasonable he is likely to be in his attitude.

And here the clever and attentive reader will say, "Aha! so you *are* going to try to reason away my illusions after all?" Well, no doubt I am; but there will be enough of them left when I am done to carry on propaganda with; so do not be alarmed.

First, let me carefully insist on the fact that the cheerful view I have put forward of illusions as useful incentives to men to strive after still better realities, is not true of all illusions. If a man sets his heart on being a millionaire, or a woman on becoming the spouse of Christ, and attaining to eternal beatitude by living a nun and dying a saint, there is not the smallest likelihood that the results will be worth exchanging for the lot of a decent railway porter or factory girl. Similarly, if a Socialist is merely a man crying out for the millennium because he wants unearned happiness for himself and the world, not only will he not get it, but he will be just as dissatisfied with what he will get as with his present condition. There are foolish illusions as well as wise ones; and a man may be opposed to our existing social system because he is not good enough for it just as easily as because it is not good enough for him.

Illusions are of two kinds, flattering ones and necessary ones. (For that matter, they are of two million kinds; but I am only concerned here with these two.)

Flattering illusions nerve us to strive for things we do not know how to value in their naked reality, and reconcile us to the discomfort of our lot or to inevitable actions which are against our consciences. The enthusiasm of the average Conservative or Liberal for his party and its leader is excited, not by facts, but by the illusion that his leader is a transcendently great statesman, and his party the champion of all the great reforms, and the opponent of all the mischievous innovations and reactions, which have occurred in the political history of the century. When, as a civilized nation, we dispossess and destroy an uncivilized one, a proceeding which, though often quite proper and unavoidable, would be plain robbery and murder between one civilized citizen and another, we invest it with the illusion of military glory, empire, patriotism, the spread of enlightenment, and so on. When a laborer boasts of being a free Englishman, and declares that he will not stand any nonsense from the German Emperor, or that he would like to see anyone lay a finger on the English Throne or the English Church, he is reconciling himself to his real slavery by the illusion of "Rule Britannia."

The foolishest of the flattering illusions is the common one by which men conceive themselves as morally superior to those with whom they differ in opinion. A Socialist who thinks that the opinions of Mr. Gladstone on Socialism are unsound and his own sound, is within his rights; but a Socialist who thinks that his opinions are virtuous and Mr. Gladstone's vicious, violates the first rule of morals and manners in a Democratic country: namely, that you must not treat your political opponent as a moral delinquent. Yet this conceited illusion, it appears, is indispensable in

political organization at present. A speech by one of our eminent party leaders usually takes the form of an explosion of virtuous indignation at the proceedings of his opponent. Mr. Chamberlain lectures Sir William Harcourt; Sir William Harcourt lectures Mr. Balfour; Mr. Balfour lectures Mr. Morley; Mr. Morley lectures Lord Salisbury, and so on. The same thing occurs, only more narrowly and virulently, between the Church party and the Nonconformists, and the Protestants and Roman Catholics in Ireland; whilst the Socialists, I regret to say, usually outdo all the other factions in their habitual assumption that their opponents—typified as "the capitalist"—are robbers, rogues, liars, and hypocrites, without a redeeming trait in their characters. Labour is commonly described by them as crucified between two thieves, a fancy picture which implies, not only the villainy of the landlord and capitalist, but the martyred sinlessness of the Socialist, who is represented (by himself) as standing to his opponents in the relation of good to evil. Now, this is an exceedingly flattering illusion. Unfortunately, it is a necessary illusion too, and therefore cannot be exorcised by a mere genteel deprecation of its uncharitableness, folly, and bad manners.

What, then, is a necessary illusion? It is the guise in which reality must be presented before it can rouse a man's interest, or hold his attention, or even be consciously apprehended by him at all. The ordinary man can be depended on to like and dislike, to admire and despise, to court life and shun death; and these impulses of his will set him thinking and working to benefit and to injure, to give and to grab, to create and destroy, to produce and consume,

to maintain and demolish, with sufficient energy and interest to produce civilization as we now have it. But if you present some problem to him which appeals to none of his passions—say a purely mathematical one—you will find great difficulty in making him understand it. He is not sufficiently interested in it to make the effort, even when he has been forced for years to acquire some practice and skill in such efforts as a schoolboy and university graduate. He only devotes himself to dispassionate thought under the compulsion of having to earn his livelihood, and then only when his training, his circumstances, and his capacity make daily work at science or philosophy less irksome to him, on the whole, than business or manual labour. Take an average skipper for example. He will master just as much science as is necessary to qualify him to obtain the indispensable Board of Trade certificates in scientific navigation. But ask him to take a gratuitous interest in science, like that of Galileo or Newton, and you will ask in vain. Mathematics, economics, physics, metaphysics, and so forth, are to him what he calls "dry subjects," which means, practically, that he will not study them unless he is paid, and not then, even, if he can get his living in any more congenial way. But he will, without any payment or external compulsion, buy and read story books or sermons, and go to the theatre or to religious services at his own expense. He is easily, willingly, pleasurably susceptible to art and religion, which appeal either to his passions and emotions, or to his direct physical sense of beauty of form, sound or color; but to science he is refractory and reluctant.

Science, accordingly, never appeals successfully to the

people without disguising itself. It must either bribe them by promising to increase their wealth, prolong their lives, and cure their diseases without interfering with their unhealthy habits; or else it must excite their romantic love of adventures and marvels by voyages in search of the pole, explorations of hidden continents, or a parade of billions and trillions of miles of interstellar space. Such devices for interesting the public are called "the popularization of science," and are privately ridiculed by scientific men (exactly as statesmen privately ridicule their own electioneering speeches), who only tolerate them to obtain the recognition and endowments necessary for their work. If Newton were alive now, he would be much less popular as "a man of science" than Mr. Edison, the American inventor; and even Mr. Edison is not popular as an inventor, but as a magician.

But do not, merely for the sake of argument, run away with the idea that the human race is divided into a few scientific Newtons, and Keplers, and Darwins, and a great many wholly unscientific Smiths and Robinsons. Newton's intellect was so powerful that he worked gratuitously at the mathematical theory of fluxions to exercise it, much as a man of great muscular power will work gratuitously at gymnastics and record breaking. But though every man is not a Newton any more than an athletic champion, every man has a certain degree of intellectual power, just as he has a certain degree of muscular power. If his daily work does not use up all his muscular power, he describes his occupation as "sedentary," and works off the surplus by "taking exercise" in the evening. If it does not use up all his mental power, he

amuses himself with puzzles, or plays games of skill, or reads treatises.

Now please consider very attentively the fact that the intellect cannot prompt its own actions, any more than the muscles can. When a man kisses a woman, the action is a purely muscular one; yet everyone knows that it never takes place until the man's purpose is formed by his feelings and his imagination. The athlete is not an automatic muscular machine: he is prompted by vanity, pugnacity, emulation, and all sorts of instincts. The same thing is true of the intellect. It does not work out fluxions or play chess of its own accord: it must be directed to that particular form of activity by some purpose or fancy in its possessor; and that purpose can only be roused by an appeal to his feelings and imagination. The only initiative power enjoyed by the intellect or the muscles is that of making a man feel restless in mind or body until he has exercised them sufficiently in some way. Hence it used to be said, in the words of a once popular corrupter of children's minds, that

Satan will find mischief still
For idle hands to do.

If this gentleman had believed in his god as devoutly as he believed in his devil, he would not have taught, in the face of the infinite benefits conferred on him in common with the rest of the world by voluntary work, that mischief comes any more or less naturally to men than suicide does.

Thus we see that though the popularization of science must be effected by presenting it as a story or drama to the feelings and the imagination, the result of the interest thus aroused will be a certain degree of scientific curiosity about

it, especially among people whose daily work consists of some sedentary routine which leaves their minds only half exercised, and does not, like the heavier forms of manual labor, so exhausts the energies of the worker that the least effort to think sends him to sleep at once. Hence we have a popular demand for "scientific explanations."

And here a subtler difficulty, only to be overcome by a fresh illusion, arises. "Explaining a science" means making it intelligible as a subject of thought. Just as the science had to be arranged as a story or drama before the public could be sufficiently interested to think about it, so it now has to be arranged as a logical theory before the human mind, however willing, can grasp it or apprehend it. The human mind is like the human hand in being able to grasp things only when they are shaped in a certain way. Take a plain wooden chair, and ask a man to lift it. He takes it by the back, or by one of the rails or legs, or by the edge of the seat, and lifts it with more or less ease. But ask him to lift it by the centre of the seat, and he cannot do it even if he were as strong as Sandow, because he cannot grasp a flat surface. He can only leave it as he finds it, and put it to its proper use by sitting down on it. Now, if instead of asking him to exercise his hands on chairs, you ask him to exercise his brain on subjects of thought, you will find him under just the same necessity to have a handle to his subject, so to speak, before he can apprehend it. And a logical theory, with its assumptions of cause and effect, time and space, and so on, is just such a mental handle and nothing else. Without a theory, natural occurrences may be put to use; but they cannot be thought out. Men construct windmills and watermills, and grind wheat

in them, long before they trouble themselves about the science of winds and currents. When they do, they have to wait until a professional thought-carpenter fits a theory to them. Then everyone can "understand the subject," provided the theory is simple enough. When I was a child I was given this handle to lay hold of the universe by:

God made Man; and Man made Money.
God made Bees; and Bees made Honey.
God made Satan; and Satan made Sin;
And God made a hole to put Satan in.

That was a somewhat rough handle; but for many ages it served, as it still serves, great masses of men to arrange the facts of the world in their own heads so that they can think coherently about them. Its absolute, self-evident validity and sufficiency once seemed as plain and certain to very able men as the validity of gravitation or evolution is to very able men at present; and there is not the smallest reasonable doubt that gravitation and evolution will some day appear quite as crude and childish as the above quatrain appeared to Darwin.

We have now before us the conditions upon which science can be received by the mass of the people at the present stage of human development. If it cannot be forced upon them as the multiplication table is forced on children, or paid for as the ship captain's study of mathematical geography is paid for, it must be dramatized, either in an artistic or a religious form, to rouse popular sympathy and enchain popular attention. And, when intellectual curiosity follows sympathy and interest, drama must be followed by theory in order that people may think it as well as feel and imagine it.

Now it will not be questioned that Socialism, if it is

to gain serious attention nowadays, must come into the field as political science and not as sentimental dogma. It is true that it is founded on sentimental dogma, and is quite unmeaning and purposeless apart from it. But so are all modern democratic political systems. The American constitution affirms, quite accurately and inevitably, that every man has a natural right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This is the formal expression of the fact that a democratic political system must start from the assumption of an absolutely dogmatic, unreasonable, unjustifiable, unaccountable, in short, "natural" determination on the part of every citizen to live, do, and say as he pleases, and to use his powers to make himself happy in his own way. Moralizers have proved again and again that life, estimated on the rational basis of a comparison of its pleasures with its pains, anxieties, and labours, is not worth living. High Tories have proved, and can still prove, that slaves purchase freedom at the exorbitant cost of guaranteed subsistence, good government, peace, order, and security. Philosophers have warned us that the pursuit of happiness is of all pursuits the most wretched, and that happiness has never yet been found except on the way to some other goal. Every man's reason assents to these propositions; and every man's will utterly ignores them. Mankind is, by definition, unreasonable on these subjects; and we affirm our unreason by claiming what we call natural rights, and agitating for political recognition of these rights as postulates from which all legislation must start, and to the practical satisfaction and enlargement of which it must all be directed. Every political document in which these rights find a fuller and more conscious expres-

sion, however ineffectual it may be practically, becomes a historic landmark, as, for example, Magna Charta, the Petition of Rights, the Habeas Corpus Act, and the American Constitution. The final recognition of "natural rights" for every man in the Declaration of Independence, in spite of the practical exclusion of women and blacks from the definition, was the formal inauguration of modern Democracy on its firm dogmatic basis.

But it is one thing to ascertain what you want to secure, and quite another to ascertain the right method of securing it. The American Constitution is often such an exasperating obstruction to the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of the American nation, that American reformers long to tear it up; and every gentleman who has been mentally disabled at a University explains that natural rights cannot exist because they are illogical—as if that were not the whole point of them. A nation making its first attempts to secure its natural rights is like a lady trying to relieve the thirsty discomfort of a very hot day by eating ices. The most obvious steps are not merely ineffectual: they defeat their own object. The early democrats, having become accustomed, under oligarchical or autocratic systems, to associate the denial of their natural rights with governmental action, began by systematically attempting to extend the power of the individual and to curtail that of the State. Hence we get, as the first fruits of Democracy, the triumph of the Whig and his principles of Freedom of Contract, Laissez-faire, and so on, with the Manchester School in his van, and the Anarchists* as his extreme left wing, just as Cromwell

* Perhaps I had better explain that by Anarchists I do not mean the unfortunate criminals who, having read in the newspapers that

had his left wing of Levellers. But a brief experience of Whig Anarchism, as a safeguard for natural rights, shows that the problem of securing their fullest practicable exercise is much more complicated than it once seemed. It is perceived that just as science throws no light on the dogmatic foundation of Democracy, so the natural right dogmas throw no light on the science of politics. The most immediate and obvious inference from these dogmas have produced a state of things which, at its worst, is a perfect hell of slavery, misery, and destruction of life in the factory and mine, and at its best, though better, on the whole, than anything that has gone before, is out of the question as a permanently satisfactory social adjustment. It has been discovered that the dominant factor in human society is not political organization, but industrial organization; and that to secure to the people control of the political organization, whilst letting the industrial organization slip through their fingers, is to intensify slavery under the political forms and pretensions of freedom and equality. In short, unless the Government controls industry, it is useless for the people to control the Government.

When this became plain, the Manchester School was superseded by the Collectivist or Socialist School; * and

Anarchists are incendiaries, thieves, and murderers, try to dignify their outbreaks by announcing themselves as Anarchists. Nor do I mean those materialist-rationalists who believe that because dynamite is logical its use is humanly valid I mean those theorists who, like Mr. Herbert Spencer or Kropotkin, would solve the social problem by abolishing State compulsion and State enterprise, and substituting the power and action of the free individual.

* The Socialists, by the way, should not forget their obligations to the Positivists—obligations so great that Mr. Sidney Webb has declared that the most obvious modern application of Comte's "law of

Democracy became Social-Democracy, their objects being the regulation, and finally the proprietorship, organization, and control of industry by the State. Now it is to be observed that we have here no recantation or revision of the dogmas of the American constitution. Democracy still pursues happiness, and strains after wider life and liberty; and it stills disregards the teachings of Asceticism and Pessimism. And Socialism is quite on the side of Democracy—quite agrees that the system it proposes must stand or fall by its success in making the people livelier, freer, and happier than they can be without it. Consequently Socialism is not distinguishable on its dogmatic side from the older-fashioned Democracy, Republicanism, Radicalism or Liberalism, or even from English Conservatism, which no longer pretends to be the organ of a class as against the people, and which is, in fact, more advanced practically than German Social-Democracy. The sole distinction lies in its contention that industrial Collectivism is the true political science of Democracy. The Socialists do not say to the Manchesterists, "Your humanitarian objects are misinterpretations of Man's will," but "Your methods of fulfilling our common object are mistaken, because your social science is erroneous. In your induction you have missed the greater part of the facts, because your interest and class prejudices have turned your attention exclusively towards the lesser part. You have relied too much on deduction and too little on historical research and contemporary investigation. You have ludicrously underrated the complexity of the problem to be solved, and have allowed

the three stages" is that Comtism is the metaphysical stage of Collectivism, and Collectivism the positive stage of Comtism.

yourselves to be hampered and stopped in your reasoning by old associations of ideas which you have mistaken for principles. To the politicians, as the engineers who must work the political machine, and the artificers who must repair and enlarge it, you have given and are giving bad advice and impracticable directions. We therefore propose to persuade the people to dismiss you and elect us in your place."

The whole question at issue, then, is one of political science and practice, and of them alone. Just as the introduction of the screw-steamer, or the cutting of the Suez Canal, did not affect the emigrant's desire to go to America or Ceylon, but simply provided him with a better method of getting there, so Socialism does not affect the goal of Democracy, but simply offers a better means of reaching it. There is no disposition to question this—at least verbally—on the Socialist side. Ever since Marx and Engels, in the Communist Manifesto, declared that all other human institutions have been and still are and ever must be only the reflection, in politics, art, religion, and what not, of industrial institutions, we have had the utmost ostentation of the scientific character of Socialism, first as against the Utopian Socialism of Fourier, and more recently as against the pure Opportunism of the established political parties. Manchesterism was the first modern political system that came into the field with absolute integrity as an application of pure political and industrial science, and not of supernatural religion or duty. Socialism is equally secular, and more materialistic and fatalistic, because it attributes more importance to circumstances as a factor in personal character and to industrial organization as a factor in society.

The data of Collectivism are to be found in Blue Books, statistical abstracts, reports, records and observations of the actual facts and conditions of industrial life, not in dreams, ideals, prophecies and revelations. In theorizing from these data, Socialists have blundered often enough—Marx, for instance, was as faulty in his abstract economics as Adam Smith—but the blunder has never been due to any intentional vitiation of the secularity of the argument by unscientific considerations.

And now, what faces us as the consequence of this scientific character of Socialism? Clearly, it must obey the law to which all science bows when it requires the support of the people. It must be popularized by being first dramatized and then theorized. It must be hidden under a veil of illusions embroidered with promises, and provided with a simple mental handle for the grasp of the common mind. I do not propose to attempt an account of all these illusions and carpenterings: in demonstrating their necessity I have done as much as I can do with profit. What follows is by way of illustration merely.

The dramatic illusion of Socialism is that which presents the working-class as a virtuous hero and heroine in the toils of a villain called "the capitalist," suffering terribly and struggling nobly, but with a happy ending for them, and a fearful retribution for the villain, in full view before the fall of the curtain on a future of undisturbed bliss. In this drama, the proletarian finds somebody to love, to sympathize with, and to champion, whom he identifies with himself; and somebody to execrate and feel indignantly superior to, whom he can identify with the social tyranny from which he suffers. Socialism is thus presented on the

platform exactly as life is presented on the stage of the Adelphi Theatre, quite falsely and conventionally, but in the only way in which the audience can be induced to take an interest in it.

Closely allied to the dramatic illusion, and indeed at bottom the same thing, is the religious illusion. This illusion presents Socialism as consummating itself by a great day of wrath, called "The Revolution," in which capitalism, commercialism, competition, and all the lusts of the Exchange, shall be brought to judgment and cast out, leaving the earth free for the kingdom of heaven on earth, all of which is revealed in an infallible book by a great prophet and leader. In this illusion the capitalist is not a stage villain, but the devil; Socialism is not the happy ending of a drama, but heaven; and Karl Marx's "Das Kapital" is "the Bible of the working-classes." The working-man who has been detached from the Established Church or the sects by the Secularist propaganda, and who, as an avowed Agnostic or Atheist, strenuously denies or contemptuously ridicules the current beliefs in heavens and devils and bibles, will, with the greatest relief and avidity, go back to his old habits of thought and imagination when they reappear in this secular form. The Christian who finds the supernatural aspect of his faith slipping away from him, recaptures it in what seems to him a perfectly natural aspect as Christian Socialism.

A popular drama must have plenty of sensational incidents—combats, trials, plots, hair-breadth escapes, and so forth. They are copiously supplied by the history of revolutionary Socialism, which has been as romantically told as any history in the world. What incidents are

to a drama, persecutions and salvational regenerations are to a religion. Accordingly we have, in the religious illusion of Socialism, a profuse exploitation of the calamities of martyrs exiled, imprisoned, and brought to the scaffold for "The Cause"; and we are told of the personal change, the transfigured, lighted-up face, the sudden accession of self-respect, the joyful self-sacrifice, the new eloquence and earnestness of the young working man who has been rescued from a purposeless, automatic loafing through life, by the call of the gospel of Socialism.*

In describing the dramatic and the religious illusions separately, I do not lose sight of the fact that most men are subject to both, just as most civilized men go both to the theatre and the church, though some go to one and not to the other. But, mixed or apart, they are the chief means by which Socialism has laid hold of its disciples. Cruder

* These transfigurations are very remarkable and touching to the observer who has not had any opportunities of following them up. They are as common in Socialist propaganda campaigns as in the Salvation Army. But to the old hand, they are dangerous symptoms of a too rapid and facile exaltation. If they are followed by a long campaign of insatiable and urgent public speaking, indoors and out, several times a week, they end in a peculiar exhaustion and emptiness of mind and character, leaving their victim a dull, hopeless windbag, opinionated without opinions, and conceited without qualities. I remember once, when lecturing, being opposed by an ex-apostle of Robert Owen, on the ground that he had observed, in the eighteen-thirties, that the propaganda had an unfavourable effect on the character of the propagandists. I quite believed him. The same qualities—or lack of qualities—that make a man suddenly and fervently impressionable, and incontinently rhapsodic and vehement in oratory, may, and sometimes do, land him in prison later on as a common, non-political, offender. But in the meantime the apparent miracle of his conversion will have made a strong impression on those religiously susceptible persons who have witnessed it.

and narrower dramatic and religious versions of the social problem still hold the field against them; but the wider, humaner, more varied and interesting character of the Socialist version, its optimism, its power of bringing happiness and heaven from dreamland and from beyond the clouds down into living, breathing reach, and the power it gains from its contact with and constant reference to contemporary fact and experience, give it an appearance of immense modernity and practicability as compared to the more barbarous and imaginary conceptions which it is superseding. But it is none the less illusory; and the more the Socialist leaders yield to the temptation to wallow recklessly in the enthusiasm and applause it creates, the more certain they are, when the moment for action arrives, to find themselves thwarted by its wrongheadedness. For when the reality at last comes to the men who have been nursed on dramatizations of it, they do not recognize it. Its prosaic aspect revolts them; and since it must necessarily come by penurious instalments, each maimed in the inevitable compromise with powerful hostile interests, its advent has neither the splendid magnitude nor the absolute integrity of principle dramatically and religiously necessary to impress them. Hence they either pass it by contemptuously or join the forces of reaction by opposing it vehemently. Worse still, to prevent the recurrence of such scandals, and maintain the purity of their faith, they begin to set up rigid tests of orthodoxy; to excommunicate the genuinely scientific Socialists; to entrust the leadership of their organizations to orators and preachers: in short, to develop all the symptoms of what the French call Impossibilism.

The first condition of an illusion is, of course, that its

victim should mistake it for a reality. The dramatic and religious illusions of Socialism, in their extreme forms, are too gross, too mercilessly and insistently contradicted by experience to impose on a capable man when once he is confronted with practical political work and responsibility. Though very few Socialists gain sufficient practical experience nowadays to be completely cured of Impossibilism, partial cures occur every day. The invaluable habit of mind which we modern Socialists have learnt from our Jevonian economics should therefore save us from the error of regarding Socialists as either out-and-out Possibilists or out-and-out Impossibilists. Neither in Socialism or anything else is it true that whatever is not white is black. Every gradation of credulity, from the crudest dreaming to the most sceptical practicality, is represented in the Socialist movement. In the extreme sections of the Social-Democratic Federation, in the Communist-Anarchist side of the Independent Labour Party, and in the Anarchist groups, the dramatic and religious illusions will be found just as I have described them. At the other extremity you have the typical Fabian, who flatly declares that there will be no revolution; that there is no class war; that the wage earners are far more conventional, prejudiced, and "bourgeois," than the middle class; that there is not a single democratically constituted authority in England, including the House of Commons, that would not be much more progressive if it were not restrained by fear of the popular vote; that Karl Marx is no more infallible than Aristotle or Bacon, Ricardo or Buckle, and, like them, made mistakes which are now plain to any undergraduate; that a professed Socialist is neither better nor worse morally

than a Liberal or Conservative, nor a working-man man than a capitalist; that the working-man can alter the present system if he chooses, whereas the capitalist cannot because the working-man will not let him; that it is perverse stupidity to declare in one breath that the working-classes are starved, degraded, and left in ignorance by a system which heaps victuals, education and refinement on the capitalist, and to assume in the next that the capitalist is a narrow, sordid scoundrel, and the working-man a high-minded, enlightened, magnanimous philanthropist; that Socialism will come by prosaic instalments of public regulation and public administration enacted by ordinary parliaments, vestries, municipalities, parish councils, school boards, and the like; and that not one of these instalments will amount to a revolution, or will occupy a larger place in the political program of its day than a Factory Bill or a County Government Bill now does: all this meaning that the lot of the Socialist is to be one of dogged political drudgery, in conflict, not with the wicked machinations of the capitalist, but with the stupidity, the narrowness, in a word the idiocy (using the word in its precise and original meaning) of all classes, and especially of the class which suffers most by the existing system.

Taking these as the two extremes between which all avowed and conscious Socialists, and a good many unavowed and unconscious ones, are to be found, we see that the scale is apparently one of diminishing illusion. But the real scale is one of acuteness of intellect, political experience, practical capacity, the strength of character which gives a man power to look unpleasant facts in the face, and doubtless also the comfortable circumstances

which enable clever professional men, with fair incomes, to be more philosophical than poor and worried ones. That is why a very crude illusion will impose on the men at one end of the scale, whilst it requires a comparatively very subtle one to impose on the men at the other. I remember once, shortly after the great London Dock Strike of 1889, addressing a rather bigoted Socialist audience from the Fabian point of view. One speaker was so strongly possessed by the dramatic illusion, that in criticising the parts played by Mr. John Burns and the late Cardinal Manning in that struggle, he vehemently denounced Mr. Burns, with many sanguinary expletives, as a cowardly trimmer and apostate, because he had not taken the cardinal by the neck and pitched him into the river. Another speaker, of acuter mind, illustrated the danger of having any dealings with Radicals who were coming round to our opinions, by the analogy of his own experience as a sprint runner, in which he had found, he said, that the man to be feared in the race was not the man farthest behind him, but the one close on his heels. Therefore, he argued, the bigoted Tory was less dangerous to us than the Radical Land Nationalizer. Now if these two Socialists be compared with, say, Shelley and Lassalle, it will not be disputed that they were enormously less capable men. But to say that the ideals of Shelley and Lassalle, however immeasurably they may have transcended those of the fraternal gentleman who wanted to have the Cardinal pitched into the river, were any less illusory in the forms in which they presented themselves to their consciousness, is more than any wise man will venture to affirm.

My reader must now beware of the illusion that other

Socialists do not recognize this scale. On the contrary, all Socialists do; but each considers himself as being at the sensible, hard-headed end of it. And the more completely a Socialist is the dupe of the dramatic and religious illusions in their crudest form, the more positively is he convinced that he is founded on a triple rock of "scientific political economy," history, and social evolution. The way in which a man, out of the abysses of an ignorance of the subject ten times deeper than any ordinary honest unconsciousness of it, will expound to you such blurred notions as he has been able to pick up of "surplus value," overproduction, commercial crises, the imminent breakdown of the capitalist system by the laws of its own development, and so on, is quite as funny as the way in which the man who opposes him will retort with scraps from the economic prophets of the Manchester school—supply and demand, the population question, the law of diminishing return, and what not?

And here we come to the second line of illusion—that which supplies the demand for a theory, not only as a sort of trapeze for the intellect, but as a scientific basis for faith. This demand is now a thoroughly popular one: even the narrowest chapel-goer likes to hear that fossils have been discovered on the tops of mountains (showing that the Deluge is scientifically proved), and that the name of Nebuchadnezzar has been deciphered on Babylonian bricks. But the popularization of genuine scientific theories is becoming daily more impossible among people who have not had an elaborate secondary education—that is, the vast majority of citizens—because the theories, as they are followed up, lose their original crude and simple forms, and become not only

complex in themselves, but unintelligible without reference to other theories. For example, the old theory of light, which had the great authority of Newton to recommend it, presented the solar spectrum (popularly, the rainbow) as consisting of three primary colours, with three secondary ones produced by the overlapping and mixing of the primaries. This was a very easy explanation: every child could take his penny paints, red, blue and yellow, and mix them into purple, green, and orange. But the modern theory of the spectrum which has prevailed since Young's time, is no such simple matter: it cannot be made intelligible to anyone who does not know something of the whole theory of light. The result is that to this day the notion of primary and secondary colours remains the popular theory.

Now Socialism, as it happens, has for its economic basis two theories, the theory of Rent and the theory of Value. The first of these seems simple to those who have mastered it; but it is neither obvious nor easy to the average sympathetic man: indeed, men of first-rate ability, among them Adam Smith, Marx, and Ruskin, have blundered over it, although writers of much less imposing eminence mastered it and formulated it for the instruction of later generations. Nobody, not even Mr. Henry George, has succeeded in popularizing it. The theory of value has a different history. Like the rainbow theory, it began by being simple enough for the most unsophisticated audience, and ended by becoming so subtle that its popularization is out of the question, especially as the old theory is helped by the sentiments of approbation it excites; whereas the scientific theory is ruthlessly indifferent to the moral sense. The

result is that the old theory is the only one available for general use among Socialists. It has accordingly been adopted by them in the form (as far as that form is popularly intelligible) laid down in the first volume of Karl Marx's "Capital." It is erroneous and obsolete; it has been modified out of existence by Marx himself in his third volume;* it would, if it were valid, disprove the existence of "surplus value" instead of proving it; it has been used again and again to discredit the economic soundness of Socialism; but any child can understand its elementary proposition that the value of a commodity is created by the labour put into it, and can be measured, as labour customarily is in the market, by hours and days; whereas the scientific theory, though based on the sufficiently plain, acceptable fact that things have value because people want them, labour being thus the consequence and not the cause of value, proved so baffling and elusive when the first attempts were made to reduce it to a rule, that until Jevons conquered it the economists gave it up as unworkable, and boldly treated commodities as possessing two distinct sorts of value—use value and exchange value—which was, of course, absurd. But, absurd as it was, it was the only handle by which men so clever as Adam Smith, Ricardo, De Quincey, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx† could lay hold of the problem; and what baffled brains as able and specially trained as theirs, is hardly likely to come easily

* Exact references on this point will be found in "German Social Democracy," by Bertrand Russell. (Longmans, 1896.)

† It must not be inferred, however, that De Quincey and Karl Marx were inferior to Jevons in intellectual subtlety. If either of them had been economists pure and simple, like Jevons, they would probably

to amateur Socialist lecturers, much less to their audiences, who generally regard the intelligible theory as favourable to Labor, and the unintelligible one

have anticipated him. But De Quincey's profession was literature, not economics; and all he aimed at was a perfectly lucid and artistic statement of the theories of Ricardo, who, not being an artist in literature, was apt to convey his meaning by saying exactly the opposite of what he meant. As it was, De Quincey stated the labour value theory and its more obvious modifications by supply and demand so artistically that Mill declared that the theory was complete, and that there was nothing left to be said on the subject.

Karl Marx failed because he was not an economist, but a revolutionary Socialist using political economy as a weapon against his opponents. The conclusion that labour is the source of value was foregone with him: he only attempted to do for a long line of theorizers, from Petty in the seventeenth century up to Hodgskin and Thompson in the nineteenth, what De Quincey had done for Ricardo: that is, supply them with a new and more closely reasoned logical process of demonstration. This he did in his analysis of a commodity, which brings him within one step of Jevons. Had he been a scientific economist seeking a theory of value with the most complete indifference to the political inferences that might be drawn from it, he would never have stopped at his consideration of a commodity as an embodiment of "abstract labour," with its aspect as an embodiment of "abstract desirability" staring him in the face as an equally obvious result of his method. But he stopped when he had, as he thought, carried his political point; and Socialism has suffered for it ever since. Possibly if Jevons had foreseen that his theory would make Socialism economically irrefutable, and extinguish the last ray of the optimistic illusion that labour power, being the product of the labour of those who produce its subsistence, must always have the value of that subsistence; so that men can never starve as long as "freedom of contract" is maintained (an exquisite consolation to the unemployed), his scientific integrity also might have gone by the board. A comparison of his shilling primer of Economics, for the use of working men, with the expensive and cryptic treatise in which his scientific theory is circulated, shows that the moment he began to write with the social and political consequences of his works in his mind, he instinctively became as much a special pleader as Marx or Adam Smith.

as hostile to it—a mistake, but a very convenient one for the lecturers, since it saves them the necessity of explaining the theory they do not understand, and enables them to ask whether it is likely that Jevons (whose renown is purely academic) was a greater man than the world-renowned Marx, forgetting that a very ordinary person may now be of opinion that the earth is round without necessarily being a greater man than Saint Augustine, who believed it to be flat.

However, a Socialist is a Socialist; and whichever theory he adopts, he arrives at the same conclusion: the advocacy of a transfer of "the means of production, distribution, and exchange" from private to collective ownership. If he could be persuaded that the old theory did not support this "principle," as he calls it, he would give up the old theory, even if Jevons were still too hard for him. And thereby comes the cherished illusion that all Socialists are agreed in principle though they may differ as to tactics. This is perhaps the most laughable of all the illusions of Socialism, so outrageously is it contradicted by the facts. It is quite true that the Socialists are in perfect agreement with one another except on those points on which they happen to differ. They can claim that happy understanding not only among themselves, but with the Liberals and Conservatives as well. But the notion that their differences are at present any less fundamental than their agreements is an illusion, as the following examination will show.

With the Socialists who are under the religious illusion in its most Calvinistic mode, the formula about the means of production represents a principle to be carried out to its

logical extreme in unbroken integrity—Man, from their point of view, being made for Socialism and not Socialism for Man. The toleration of even such a convenient infraction of the principle as allowing an individual to keep a typewriter or a bicycle for his own exclusive use without some very explicit and constant affirmation of the fact that it was common property, would be resisted by them as determinedly as an old-fashioned New England Methodist resists the introduction of an organ into his meeting house. Other Socialists—the Fabians, for instance—openly and expressly treat the question of private property as one of pure convenience, and declare that as long as the livelihood of the people is made independent of private capital and enterprise, the more private property and individual activity we have the better. Here, clearly, far from the Calvinistic Socialist being agreed with the Fabian Socialist in principle, it is just on the question of principle that they are irreconcileable, though circumstances may at any moment bring them to an agreement as to tactics. I myself am firmly persuaded that Socialism will not prove worth carrying out in its integrity—that long before it has reached every corner of the political and industrial organization, it will have so completely relieved the pressure to which it owes its force that it will recede before the next great movement in social development, leaving relics of untouched Individualist Liberalism in all directions among the relics of feudalism which Liberalism itself has left. I believe that its dissolution of the petty autocracies and oligarchies of private landlordism and capitalism will enormously stimulate genuine individual enterprise instead of suppressing it; and I strongly suspect that Socialist

States will connive at highly undemocratic ways of leaving comparatively large resources in the hands of certain persons, who will thereby become obnoxious as a privileged class to the consistent levellers. If I am right, Socialism at its height will be as different from the ideal of the "Anti-State Communists" of the Socialist League in 1885, and of Domela Nieuwenhuis and his Dutch Communist Anarchist comrades to-day, as current Christianity is from the ideal of the apostles and of Tolstoi. This, of course, is not my "principle": it is my practical view of the situation; but the fact that I do not think it wrong to take that view, and should unhesitatingly vote for a man who took it as against a man who took what I have called the Calvinist view, appears to the Calvinist mind to be conclusive evidence either that I am no Socialist, or else that I am so cynically indifferent to "principle" in the abstract that I cannot properly be said to be anything at all. To settle the matter, let us again apply the Jevonian method. Instead of asking "Are you a Socialist or not?" let us say, "How much are you a Socialist?" or, more practically still, "What do you want to Socialize; and how much and when do you propose to Socialize it?" The moment the case is put in this way, all pretence of agreement vanishes. Let me suggest a few detailed questions. Do you advocate the socialization of the cotton industry, of shipbuilding, of railways, of coal mines, of building, of food supply, and of the clothing trades? If so, do you contemplate the socialization of the book industry? and do you, in that case, conceive that the Kelmscott Press and the Doves Bindery would be incorporated with the Stationery Office, with Mr. William Morris and Mr. Cobden Sanderson as salaried officials,

under the orders of an Under Secretary and a Cabinet Minister?* Do you advocate the socialization of the church, the chapel, the "hall of science," the services of the Ethical Society, and of the Salvation Army? If so, do you advocate the socialization of the theatre and concert room? Do you propose merely to extend State enterprise to industry, or to enforce State monopoly by suppressing all private enterprise in industry? Or would you monopolize in some cases and not in others, according to circumstances? For instance, if you socialized surgery and painting, would you punish a dentist for making a private contract with a citizen to extract his tooth for a guinea, or fine Sir Edward Burne Jones for painting his daughter's portrait out of office hours for nothing?

I might devise pages of such questions; but the above are quite sufficient to divide Socialists into two sections: first, the fanatics who are prepared to sacrifice all considerations of human welfare and convenience sooner than flinch from the rigorous application of "their principles," † even to the point of burlesquing their own creed; and, second, the more or less practical men, among whom there would be as much diversity of opinion on each particular

* The death of William Morris since the above sentence was written only adds force to the question, since it has brought home to us our complete dependence for eminent work on the free initiative of eminent men.

† I put it in this flattering way so as not to hurt anyone's feelings. But I am bound to say that I am extremely sceptical about the fanaticism of our friends who are so determined not to "compromise their principles." I suspect some of them of using a formula to save themselves the trouble of finding sensible answers for practical questions, and the humiliation of confessing that their panacea will not cure all ailments.

point as there is on any ordinary question in the House ot Commons. Thus the unity of Socialism, and the existence of definite boundary lines between it and Progressivism, prove to be mere illusions. Notwithstanding which, the battle cry of the Communist Manifesto, "Proletarians from every land, unite!" still inspires us; and we gain a foolish but effective courage from the imaginary tread of millions of workers joining the mighty columns of the Revolution.

The double rampart of illusion is now complete. Socialism wins its disciples by presenting civilization to them as a popular melodrama, or as a Pilgrim's Progress through suffering, trial, and combat against the powers of evil to the bar of poetic justice with paradise beyond; by holding up its leaders as heroes, prophets, and seers; and by satisfying the intellectual curiosity and criticism which the picture arouses with a few links of logic held up and jingled as scientific formulæ. It is in such ways that the will of the world accomplishes itself. Out of the illusion of "the abolition of the wage system" we shall get steady wages for everybody, and finally discredit all other sources of income as disreputable. By the illusion of the downfall of Capitalism we shall turn whole nations into Joint Stock Companies; and our determination to annihilate the *bourgeoisie* will end in making every workman a *bourgeois gentilhomme*. By the illusion of Democracy, or government by everybody, we shall establish the most powerful bureaucracy ever known on the face of the earth, and finally get rid of popular election, trial by jury, and all the other makeshifts of a system in which no man can be trusted with power. By the illusion of scientific

materialism we shall make life more and more the expression of our thought and feeling, and less and less of our craving for more butter on our bread. But in the meantime we shall continue to make fools of ourselves; to make our journals bywords for slander and vituperation in the name of fraternity; to celebrate the advent of universal peace by the most intemperate quarrelling; to pose as uneducated men of the people whilst advancing claims to scientific infallibility which would make Lord Kelvin ridiculous; to denounce the middle class, to which we ourselves mostly belong: in short, to wallow in all the follies and absurdities of public life with the fullest conviction that we have attained a Pisgah region far above such Amalekitish superstitions. No matter: it has to be done in that way, or not at all. Only, please remember, still in the true Jevonian spirit, that the question is not whether illusions are useful or not, but exactly how useful they are.

Up to a certain point, illusion—or, as it is commonly called by Socialists, "enthusiasm"—is, more or less, precious and indispensable; but beyond that point it gives more trouble than it is worth: in Jevonese language, its utility becomes disutility. There are some Socialists who, to put it plainly, are such fools that they do more harm than good, even in the roughest sort of preliminary propaganda. Others, more sensible, do excellent work as preachers and revivalists, but are nuisances when the work of formal political organization begins. Others, who can get as far as organizing an election without being disqualified by the vehemence of their partisanship, would, if elected themselves, be worse than useless as legislators and administrators. Others

are good parliamentary orators and debaters, but bad committee men. As the work requires more and more ability and temper, it requires more and more freedom from the cruder illusions, especially those which dramatize one's opponents as villains and fiends, and more and more of that quality which is the primal republican material—that sense of the sacredness of life which makes a man respect his fellow without regard to his social rank or intellectual class, and recognizes the fool of Scripture only in those persons who refuse to be bound by any relations except the personally luxurious ones of love, admiration, and identity of political opinion and religious creed. Happily none of us is quite without this republican quality; for it is not a question of having it or not, but of having it more or less (the inevitable Jevons again, you see); and it is certain that unless it is so strong in a man that he is habitually at least a little conscious of it, he is hardly good enough for the world as it is, much less for the Socialist world to come. To such a man alone can Equality have any sense or validity in a society where men differ from one another through an enormous compass of personal ability, from the peasant to the poet and philosopher. Perhaps to such a one alone will it be plain that a Socialist may, without offence or arrogance, or the least taint of intentional cynicism, discourse as freely as I have done on the illusions of his own creed.

*September, 1896.*

# TRANSITIONS TO FREEDOM.

BY EDWARD CARPENTER.

---

AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS since the first French Revolution the problem indicated by the words "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," seems to be shaping up towards something like a *possibility* of solution. In modern social changes there is a curious new element arising from the fact that political and social science is now so far advanced that though we cannot actually predict we can to some extent (as the foregoing essays show) forecast the future; and it is no longer necessary for us simply to shriek a watchword, and then blunder along helplessly and blindly in some opposite direction. Society can now quite conveniently attend and even assist at its own birth; and we are beginning actually to witness and to aid in the processes by which the free communities of the future are working themselves out.

While the members of the various Socialist bodies differ, as Bernard Shaw says in the preceding chapter, very widely in their views, it seems to me that they agree—or those who think at all about the matter agree—in their general conception of the stages through which modern society is passing. They all agree that we are approaching a Collectivist stage in which industrial arrangements will be largely handled or regulated by governmental agency;

and they all agree that beyond that lies a non-governmental (or Anarchist) stage in which authoritative regulation will fall off, leaving such arrangements largely to custom and spontaneous initiative. *Only* they differ immensely in the importance which they attach to these stages and their sub-stages. Says Kropotkin, "No doubt we shall *have* to pass through a stage of State Collectivism; but Anarchism is our aim. The former is only a nuisance; let us hurry past it as quickly as we can, holding our noses, so to speak." Says Hyndman, "No doubt, good friends, a free Communism is what Society will come to some day, but it is so remote, you know, so remote; Collectivism, the nationalisation of the land and all the instruments of production, is the word of the near future—let us concentrate our efforts on that." Says Sidney Webb, "What was that I heard about the land and all the instruments of production? Sounds a large order—suppose we begin by organising a Water supply for London." Like folk on a journey from Manchester to Paris, one man thinks only about Paris, and the happy time he will have when he gets there; another plans his journey as far as Dover, but leaves his arrangements for crossing the Channel till he sees the sea; and a third simply gets out his Bradshaw and looks up the next train to London. And it still remains doubtful which man will get to Paris first. So the Anarchists, Social Democrats, Labour parties, Fabians, and Trade Unions are practically to-day along the same line of march; only they fix their minds on different points on the line; and even Lord Salisbury, who misses no opportunity of pointing out (and who certainly ought to know) the corruption and imbecility of Governments, might—if he were only consistent, which of course he is not—fall into the procession too.

What I propose to do in this paper is to show that the last stage on the line of march is a possible one to reach, and not after all so remote as some may be inclined to think; and to indicate some of the steps and transitions which are bringing us along a road on which, as I take it, our feet are actually set.

The chief difficulty which arises in people's minds at the thought of a free non-governmental society does not concern its desirability—they are agreed as a rule that it would be desirable—but concerns its practicability. And this difficulty is derived from the society of the present. People see in fact that an internecine competition for subsistence is the ruling force of life to-day, and the chief incentive to production, and they infer that without government society would dissolve into a mere chaos of plunder on the one hand, and of laziness on the other.* It is this difficulty which has first to be removed.

Though it seems a hard thing to say, the outer life of society to-day is animated first and foremost by Fear. From the wretched wage-slave who rises before the break of day, hurries through squalid streets to the dismal sound of the "hummer," engages for nine, ten, or twelve hours, and for a pittance wage, in monotonous work which affords him no interest, no pleasure; who returns home to find his children gone to bed, has his supper and, worn out and weary, soon retires himself, only to rise again in the morning and pursue the same deadly round; and who leads a life thus monotonous, inhuman, and devoid of all dignity and

*Though it must, to be strictly impartial, be pointed out that this difficulty is chiefly felt by those classes who themselves live on interest and in ornamental idleness.

reality, simply because he is hounded to it by the dread of starvation;—to the big commercial man who, knowing that his wealth has come to him through speculation and the turns and twists of the market, fears that it may at any moment take to itself wings by the same means; who feels that the more wealth he has, the more ways there are in which he may lose it, the more cares and anxieties belonging to it; and who to continually make his position secure is, or thinks himself, forced to stoop to all sorts of mean and dirty tricks;—over the great mass of the people the same demon spreads its dusky wings. Feverish anxiety is the keynote of their lives. There is no room for natural gladness or buoyancy of spirits. You may walk the streets of our great cities, but you will hear no one singing—except for coppers; hardly a ploughboy to-day whistles in the furrow; and in almost every factory (this is a fact) if a workman sang at his work he would be "sacked." We are like shipwrecked folk clambering up a cliff. The waves are raging below. Each one clings by handhold or foothold where he may, and in the panic if he push his neighbour from a point of vantage, it is to be regretted certainly, but it cannot be helped!

But such a state of affairs is not normal. Allowing that competition in some degree must always exist, history still, except at rare crises, presents us with no such spectacle of widespread anxiety; the study of native races—whom *we* might consider in a state of destitution—reveals no such dominion of dread. I want the reader to imagine for a moment this burden of fear lifted off the hearts of a whole people; and the result.

Let us imagine for a moment that some good fairy—

some transcendental Chancellor of the Exchequer—with a stroke of his wand, has assured to us all not only an old-age pension, but a decent provision for all our days of the actual necessaries of life (to go no farther than that); so that for the future no man could feel any serious or grinding anxiety for his own material safety or that of his family. What would be the result on our actions?

Perhaps, as many would maintain, nine-tenths of the population would say, "I'm blessed if I'll ever do another stroke of work." Like the organ-grinder who came into a little fortune, and who forthwith picked up an axe and fell upon his organ, shouting as he hacked it to pieces, "You shall neffer play dat tam *Alabama Coon* any more"—we should feel so sick of our present jobs that we should want to turn our backs on them for ever. Very likely, I should say—and rightly enough too; for "work" in the present day is done under such degrading and miserable conditions by the vast majority of the population that the very best and most manly thing we could do would be to refuse to continue doing it.

But let us suppose, since a bare living has been assured to us and we are in no danger of actual starvation, that we all take a good long holiday—and abstain religiously from doing anything. Suppose that we simply twirl our thumbs in idleness for two, three, four, or six months. Still, is it not obvious that at the end of that time nine-tenths of the population would find sheer idleness appallingly dreary, and that they would *set themselves* to work at some thing or other? —to produce objects of use or beauty, either for themselves, or for their families and neighbours, or even conceivably for society at large: that in fact a spontaneous and free pro-

duction of goods would spring up, followed of course by a spontaneous and free exchange—a self-supporting society based not on individual dread and anxiety, but on the common fulness of life and energy?

That people relieved from care do spontaneously set themselves to work is sufficiently shown by the case of the well-to-do classes to-day. For these people, though having *everything* provided for them, and not merely the bare necessaries which we have supposed, exhibit the most extraordinary and feverish energy in seeking employment. A few decades of years have been quite sufficient to make them feel the utter failure of picnics as an object in life; and now we are flooded with philanthropic and benevolent societies, leagues, charity organisations, art missions to the poor, vigilance crusades, and other activities, which are simply the expression of the natural energies of the human being seeking an outlet in social usefulness. It is of course to be regretted that owing to the very imperfect education of this class, their ideas and their capacities of social usefulness should be so limited. However this is a defect which will no doubt be remedied in the future. All that concerns us here is to see that since the rich, though in many ways ill-adapted by training and circumstance, do spontaneously take up a life of this kind, there is nothing extravagant in supposing that the average man, surrounded by so many unfulfilled needs, might do the same.

And if anyone still doubts let him consider the thousands in our large towns to-day who would give their ears to be able to get out and work on the land—not so much from any prospect of making a fortune that way, as from mere love of the life; or who in their spare time cultivate gardens

or plots or allotments as a hobby; or the thousands who when the regular day's work is over start some fresh little occupation of their own—some cabinet-making, wood turning, ornamental ironwork or whatnot; the scores of thousands in fact that there are of *natural* gardeners, cabinet-makers, ironworkers, and so forth; and then think how if they were free these folk would sort themselves spontaneously to the work they delighted in.

Thus it appears to be at least *conceivable* that a people not hounded on by compulsion nor kept in subjection by sheer authority would set itself spontaneously to produce the things which it prized. It does not of course at once follow that the result would be perfect order and harmony. But there are a few considerations in the positive direction which I may introduce here.

In the first place each person would be guided in the selection of his occupation by his own taste and skill, or at any rate would be guided by these to a greater extent than he is to-day; and on the whole would be *more* likely to find the work for which he was fitted than he is now. The increase in effective output and vitality from this cause alone would be great. While the immense *variety* of taste and skill in human beings would lead to a corresponding variety of spontaneous products.

In the second place the work done would be Useful. It is certain that no man would freely set himself to dig a hole, only to fill it up again—though it is equally certain that a vast amount of the work done to-day is no more useful than that. If a man were a cabinet-maker and made a chest of drawers, either for himself or a neighbour, he would make it so that the drawers would open and shut;

but nine-tenths of the chests made on commercial principles are such that the drawers will neither open nor shut. They are not *meant* to be useful, they are meant to have the semblance of being useful; but they are really made to *sell*. To sell, and by selling yield a profit. And for that purpose they are better adapted if, appearing useful, they turn out really useless, for then the buyer must come again and so yield another profit to the manufacturer and the merchant. The waste to the community to-day arising from causes of this kind is enormous; but it is of no moment as long as there is profit to a certain class.

Work in a free society would be done because it was useful. It is curious, when you come to think of it, that there is no other conceivable reason why work should be done. And of course I here include what is beautiful under the term useful—as there is no reason why one should separate what satisfies one human need, like the art-need, from another human need, like the hunger-need. I say the idea of work implies that it is undertaken because the product itself satisfies some human need. But strangely enough in Commerce that is not so. The work is undertaken in order that the product may *sell*, and so yield a profit; that is all. It is of no moment *what* the product is, or whether bad or good, as long as it fulfils this one condition. And so the whole spirit of life and industry in the other society would be so utterly different from that of the present, that it is really difficult for us to compare the results. But it is not difficult to see that if on the principles of freedom there was not so *much* produced, in mere quantity, and folk did not (as may indeed be hoped) work so many hours a day as now, still, the goods turned out being

sincere and genuine, there would really be far more value shown in a year than on the strictly commercial system.

In the third place it follows—as William Morris points out in his foregoing paper, and elsewhere—that "work" in the new sense would be a pleasure—one of the greatest pleasures undoubtedly of life; and this one fact would transform its whole character. We cannot say that now. How many are there who take real pleasure and satisfaction in their daily labour? Are they, in each township, to be counted on the fingers? But what is the good of life if its chief element, and that which must always be its chief element, is odious? No, the only true economy is to arrange so that your daily labour shall be itself a joy. Then, and then only, are you on the safe side of life. And, your work being such, its product is sure to become beautiful; that painful distinction between the beautiful and the useful dies out, and everything made is an artistic product. Art becomes conterminous with life.

Thus it will be observed that whereas the present society is founded on a system of Private Property, in which, almost necessarily, the covetous hard type of man becomes the large proprietor, and (supported by law and government) is enabled to prey upon the small one; and whereas the result of this arrangement is a bitter and continuous struggle for possession, in which the motive to activity is mainly Fear; we, on the contrary, are disentangling a conception of a society in which Private Property is supported by no apparatus of armed authority, but as far as it exists is a perfectly spontaneous arrangement, and in which the main motives to activity are neither Fear nor greed of Gain, but rather Community of life and Interest in life—in which in fact

you undertake work because you *like* the work, because you feel that you can do it, and because you know that the product will be useful, either to yourself or someone else!

How Utopian it all sounds! How absurdly simple and simple-minded—to work because you like the work and desire the product! How delightful if it could be realised, but of course how "unpractical" and impossible!

Yet is it really impossible? From Solomon to Dr. Watt we have been advised to go to the Ant and the Bee for instruction—and lo! they are unpractical and Utopian too. Can anything be more foolish than the conduct of these little creatures, any one of whom will at any moment face death in defence of his tribe? While the Bee is absolutely so ignorant and senseless that instead of storing up the honey that it has gathered in a little cell of its own, with a nice lock and key, it positively puts it in the common cells and cannot distinguish it from the stores of the others. Foolish little Bee, the day will surely come when you will bitterly rue your "unthrifty" conduct, and will find yourself starving while your fellow tribesmen are consuming the fruits of your labour.

And the human body itself, that marvellous epitome and mirror of the universe—how about that? Is it not Utopian too? It is composed of a myriad cells, members, organs, compacted into a living unity. A healthy body is the most perfect society conceivable. What does the hand say when a piece of work is demanded of it? Does it bargain first for what reward it is to receive, and refuse to move until it has secured satisfactory terms? or the foot decline to take us on a journey till it knows what special gain is to accrue to *it* thereby? Not so; but each limb and

cell does the work which is before it to do, and (such is the Utopian law) the *fact of its doing the work* causes the circulation to flow to it, and it is nourished and fed in proportion to its service. And we have to ask whether the same may not be the law of a healthy human society? Whether the fact of a member doing service (however humble) to the community would not be quite sufficient to ensure his provision by the rest with all that he might need? Whether the community would think of allowing such an one to starve any more than a man would think of allowing his least finger to pine away and die? Whether it is not possible that men would cease to feel any anxiety about the "reward of their labour"; that they would think of their work and the pleasure they had in doing it, first, and would not doubt that the reward would follow?

For indeed the instinct to do anything which is obviously before you to do, which is wanted, and which you *can* do, is very strong in human nature. Even children, those rudimentary savages, are often extremely proud to be "useful"—and it is conceivable that we might be sensible enough, instead of urging them as we do now—to "get on," to make money, to beat their fellows in the race of life, and by climbing on other folk's heads to ultimately reach a position where they would have to work no longer—that we might teach them how when they grew up they would find themselves members of a self-respecting society which, while it provided them *gratis* with all they might need, would naturally expect them in honour to render some service in return. Even small children could understand that. Is it quite inconceivable that a society of grown men and women might act up to it.

But it is really absurd to argue about the possibility of these things in human society, when we have so many actual examples of them before our eyes. Herman Melville, in that charming book, *Typee*, describes the Marquesas Islanders of the Pacific, among whom he lived for some time during the year 1846. He says, "During the time I lived among the Typees no one was ever put upon his trial for any offence against the public. To all appearances there were no courts of law or equity. There was no municipal police for the purpose of apprehending vagrants or disorderly characters. In short there were no legal provisions whatever for the well-being and conservation of society, the enlightened end of civilised legislation." Nevertheless the whole book is a eulogy of the social arrangements he met with, and with almost a fervour of romance in its tone; and yet, like all his descriptions of the natives of the Pacific Islands, undoubtedly accurate, and well corroborated by the travellers of the period. An easy communism prevailed. When a good haul of fish was made, those who took part in it did not keep the booty to themselves but parcelled it out and sent it throughout the tribe, retaining only their proportionate share. When one family required a new cabin, the others would come and help to build it. He describes such an occasion, when, "at least a hundred of the natives were bringing materials to the ground, some carrying in their hands one or two of the canes which were to form the sides, others slender rods of hibiscus, strung with palmetto leaves, for the roof. Everyone contributed something to the work; and by the united but easy labours of all the entire work was completed before sunset."

Similar communistic habits prevail of course through a vast number of savage tribes, and indeed almost anywhere that the distinctively commercial civilisation has not set its mark. They may be found close at home, as in the little primitive island of St. Kilda in the Hebrides, where exactly the same customs of sharing the hauls of fish or the labours of housebuilding exist to-day,* which Melville describes in Typee; and they may be found all along the edges of our civilisation in the harvesting and house-warming "bees" of the backwoods and outlying farm-populations. And we may fairly ask, not whether such social habits are possible, but whether they are not in the end the only possible form; for surely it is useless and absurd to call these modern hordes of people, struggling with each other for the means of subsistence and jammed down by violent and barbaric penal codes into conditions which enforce the struggle, *societies*; as it would be absurd to call the wretched folk in the Black Hole of Calcutta a society. If anyone will only think for a minute of his own inner nature he will see that the only society which would ever really satisfy him would be one in which he was perfectly free, and yet bound by ties of deepest trust to the other members; and if he will think for another minute he will see that the only condition on which he could be perfectly free (to do as he liked) would be that he *should* trust and care for his neighbour as well as himself. The conditions are perfectly simple; and since they have been more or less realised by countless primitive tribes of animals and men, it is surely not impossible for civilised man to realise them. If it be argued (which is perfectly true) that modern societies are so much more complex than the

* See ch. xi of *Poverty and the State*, by H. V. Mills.

primitive ones, we may reply that if modern man, with his science and his school-boards and his brain cultivated through all these centuries, is not competent to solve a more complex problem than the savage, he had better return to savagery.

But it is getting time to be practical.

Of the *possibility* of a free communistic society there can really I take it be no doubt. The question that more definitely presses on us now is one of transition—by what steps shall we, or can we pass to that land of freedom?

We have supposed a whole people started on its journey by the lifting off of the burden of Fear and Anxiety; but in the long slow ascent of Evolution no sudden miraculous change can be expected; and for this reason alone it is obvious that we can look for no sudden transformation to the communist form. Peoples that have learnt the lesson of "trade" and competition so thoroughly as the modern nations have—each man fighting for his own hand—must take some time to unlearn it. The Sentiment of the Common Life, so long nipped and blighted, must have leisure to grow and expand again; and we must acknowledge that—in order to foster new ideas and new habits—an intermediate stage of Collectivism will be quite necessary. Formulæ like the "nationalisation of the land and all the instruments of production," though they be vague and indeed impossible of *rigorous* application will serve as centres for the growth of the sentiment. The partial application of these formulæ will put folk through a lot of useful *drilling* in the effort to work together and for common ends.*

* When one looks sometimes at the awful residue and dregs which are being left as a legacy to the Future by our present commercial

If I might venture (taking only the agencies which we see already around us at work) to sketch out how *possibly* the transitions to the free communistic state will be effected it would be somewhat as follows.

In the first place the immense growth of the Unemployed—which is so marked a feature of the day, and which is due to the monopoly of land and machinery in the hands of the few—is going before long to force the hand of government (as indicated by A. R. Wallace, and Russell Smart in their respective papers) to the development of big industrial schemes, and to the socialisation (in some degree) of land and machinery. While at the same time the rolling up of companies into huge and huger trusts is going to make all such transfers of industry to public control daily more obviously necessary and more easy to effect.

On the other hand the Trade-unions and Co-operative Societies, by rapid development of productive as well as distributive industries, by the interchange of goods with each other on an evergrowing scale (as pointed out by Tom Mann in the second essay), and possibly by the adoption of a currency of their own, will be bringing about a similar result. They will create a society in which enormous wealth will be produced and handled not for the profit of the few but for the use of the many; a *voluntary* collectivism working within and parallel with the official collectivism of the State.

As this double collectivism grows and spreads, profit-

system—the hopeless helpless drunken incapable men and women who drift through London and the country districts from workhouse to workhouse, or the equally incapable and more futile idlers in high places, one feels that possibly only a rather systematic industrial organisation will enable the coming society to cope with these burdens.

grinding will more and more cease to be a lucrative profession. The spread of employment and the growing security of a good wage, combined with the extraordinary cheapening of production (owing to machinery, etc.) which is already taking place, will bring about a kind of general affluence—or at least absence of poverty. The unworthy Fear which haunts the hearts of nine-tenths of the population, the anxiety for the beggarly elements of subsistence, will pass away or fade in the background, and with it the mad nightmarish competition and bitter struggle of men with each other. Even the sense of Property itself will be alleviated. To-day the institution of Property is like a cast iron railing against which a human being may be crushed, but which still is retained because it saves us from falling into the gulf. But to-morrow when the gulf of poverty is practically gone, the indicating line between one person and another need run no harsher than an elastic band.*

It is this general rise in well-being due to the next few years of collectivist development which will I believe play the part of the good fairy in the transformation-scene of modern society. With the dying-out of fear and grinding anxiety and the undoing of the frightful tension which to-day characterises all our lives, Society will spring back nearer to its normal form of mutual help. People will wake

* This curious alleviation indeed is already markedly visible. Forty years ago the few dressed in broadcloth, the masses in fustian; but now that silk is made out of wood-pulp, and everybody can dress and does dress in the latest fashion, it is no distinction to have fine clothes. Similarly with books, travel, and a hundred other things. What is the good of being a millionaire when the man with three pounds a week can make almost as good a show as you?

up with surprise, and rub their eyes, to find that they are under no necessity of being other than human.*

Simultaneously (*i.e.*, with the disappearance of Money as an engine of interest and profit-grinding) the huge nightmare which weighs on us to-day, the monstrous incubus of "business"—with its endless Sisyphus labours, its searchings for markets, its displacement and destruction of rivals, its travellers, its advertisements, its armies of clerks, its banking and broking, its accounts and checking of accounts —will collapse, and roll off like a great burden to the ground. Freed from the great strain and waste which all this system creates, the body politic will recover like a man from a disease, and spring to unexpected powers of health.

Meanwhile in the great industrial associations, governmental and voluntary, folk will have been learning the sentiment of the Common Life—the habit of acting together for common ends, the habit of feeling together for common interests—and once this has been learnt the rest will follow of its own accord. We need not fear that State-organisation will run to the bitter end so often prophesied—nor is there any danger of poetry and ginger-beer being converted into government monopolies. But it may perhaps be hoped that it will go far enough to form the nucleus of immense growths of voluntary Socialism, and to give (as government action does) a very distinct direction to the current of public opinion.

* At the same time it must not be blinked that in the growth of the modern millionaire we are face to face with a serious evil. Now that any man endowed with a little low cunning and tempted by self-conceit and love of power has a good chance of making himself enormously rich, Society is in danger of being ruled by as mean a set of scoundrels as ever before in History. And nothing less than a complete transformation of our monetary system will enable us to cope with this danger.

If this seems an odd mixture of Anarchism and State-Socialism, it has to be remembered—and Bernard Shaw has consumed a great many valuable pages of this book in showing it—that there is not the smallest chance of any "ideal," pure and simple, of society being at any time absolutely realised. Besides an ideal is at best an awkward thing. For while it is obviously either Smith's ideal or Brown's ideal, it is pretty certain that Brown's ideal would not suit Smith, nor Smith's ideal suit Brown. So that while we can see plainly enough the communistic direction in which society is trending we may both hope and fairly expect that the resulting form will not be the exact "ideal" of any labour party; but will be broad enough and large enough to include an immense diversity of institutions and habits as well as a considerable survival of the social forms of to-day.*

The payment of labour by wages for example is not exactly an ideal of the most advanced party, yet it is probably an arrangement that will continue for a long period. It may perhaps be said that in some ways a generous wage-payment convention (as for instance sketched in the last chapter of Carruther's *Commercial and Communal Economy*) on a thoroughly democratic basis, gives more freedom than a formless Anarchism in which each one takes "according to his needs,"—simply because under the first system, A could work two hours a day and live on the wage of two, and B could work eight and live on the wage of eight, each with perfect moral freedom—whereas if there

* Also it has to be remembered that the difference between Anarchism and Socialism is not so much a matter of the *form* of social organisation as of the degree in which it is *voluntary* and not forced.

was no wage system, A (however much he might wish to loafe) would feel that he was cheating the community—and the community would think so too—unless he gave his eight hours like everybody else.*

The great point however to bear in mind in all this matter is that though the Cash-nexus may and no doubt will linger on for a long time in various forms of Wages, Purchase, Sale, and so forth, it must inevitably with the changing sentiment and conditions of life lose its cast-iron, stringent character, and gradually be converted into the elastic cord, which while it may indicate a line of social custom—will yield to pressure when the need arises. Private Property will thus lose its present virulent character and subside into a matter of mere use or convenience; monetary reckonings and transfers, as time goes on, will seem little more than formalities—as to-day between friends.

Finally, Custom alone will remain. The subsidence of the Property feeling will mean the subsidence of brute force Law, for whose existence property is mainly responsible. The peoples accustomed to the varied activities of a complex industrial organism, will still—though relieved from the compulsion either of hunger or of brute authority—continue through custom to carry on those activities—their Reason in the main approving.

Custom will remain—slowly changing. And the battles of the Heroes of the future will be individualistic not against the armed force of governments, but against the apathetic routine and inertia of the human masses.

* It is difficult also to see how things like railways and the immense modern industries (if these survive) could be carried on without some such system of wage-payment and the definite engagement to fulfil certain work which it carries with it.